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IMPENDING DANGERS  
OF  
ENGLAND  
AND  
EVILS OF OUR NAVAL  
AND  
MILITARY ORGANIZATION.



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IMPENDING DANGERS  
OF  
ENGLAND  
AND  
EVILS OF OUR NAVAL AND MILITARY  
ORGANIZATION :

BY  
W. M. MAXWELL, Esq.

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## IMPENDING DANGERS OF ENGLAND.

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“VÆ VICTIS—(Woe to the Conquered.)” Were the words used by Lord Lyndhurst, the Nestor of the House of Lords, on the 5th of July last, in the speech he delivered in that House as a warning to the British nation, now that Steam has deprived us of our naval supremacy, and that France can, for the first time in her history, bring double our number of ships of war into the Channel; for although we may admit the naval forces of both countries to be pretty nearly equal at the present moment, we cannot deny the fact that one half of ours is always absent on foreign stations for the protection of our commerce and Colonial possessions; a contingency not required by France.

The unprecedented augmentation of the naval armaments of France, to enable the Emperor to carry into effect the remaining acts of his destiny, now that the restoration of his dynasty has been recognised by all European Sovereigns, ought to remove all doubts as to the objects contemplated by those armaments. Seeing that they are openly declared by Frenchmen

of all grades, and reverberated with an air of triumph from one extremity of the Empire to the other, the stain on the national honor by the victories of Trafalgar, Waterloo, &c., &c., must be obliterated, and France raised from the humiliating position in which she was placed by the Holy Alliance at the treaty of Vienna.

These notes of martial music naturally find a responsive echo in our arsenals and dockyards, which, aided by the wings of the press, only serves to increase the enthusiasm of our former foes, to an extent that induces many of them to put a construction of an aggressive nature on preparations which are merely for self-defence. It becomes imperative on us, under such circumstances, to be prepared for that defence, and to use our utmost exertions for the removal of the defects so much complained of in the administration of our naval and military affairs.

Various letters and articles have appeared in the *Times* and other publications, exposing these defects, for some time past, and in many instances so valuable as to render it a matter of regret that they should, like transient rays of light, be so soon lost sight of and buried in oblivion. The Editor of this publication conceived that he would be consequently rendering a public service, by reproducing some of those letters and articles, which, like drops of water, may have made impressions soon forgotten, but which when continued (as one of our Latin poets has reminded us), will, like reiterated drops, penetrate stone.

“Gutta cavet lapidem non vi, sed sæpe cadendo,

“Sic homo fit doctus non vi, sed sæpe legendo.”

We should remind our readers, then, that when the public mind is thus excited in France, it acts like

steam got up to a high pressure, a safety valve must be provided, or an explosion must take place, and that war is consequently as certain now with some foreign power as it was with Russia in 1854, and with Austria at the commencement of the present year; the public mind in France having been excited on both occasions in a similar manner.

Had any other foreign power except England possessed a fleet that would require such extraordinary efforts for its subjugation, we might flatter ourselves with the idea that every confidence should be placed in the Emperor's celebrated proclamation to Europe, as to "*the empire being the emblem of Peace;*" we cannot, at the same time, overlook the fact that, if no alternative is left him but that of an explosion at home, resulting from the prevailing dissatisfaction at the useless expenditure of blood and treasure in the Crimean and Italian wars, or opening the safety valve in the direction of some nation of reputed wealth, to make amends for that expenditure, there would be little doubt as to the result. The gratification of his own subjects being his first consideration, and the fulfilment of his destiny his fixed determination, as so repeatedly admitted by himself, namely, the destruction of the treaty of Vienna, by which France was so humiliated, and the recognition by all European states of his dynasty, which had been by that treaty excluded for ever from the throne of France. But not being able to declare war against the Sovereigns of Europe *collectively*, who were parties to that treaty, he appears to have most skilfully decided on taking them *in detail*, never at a loss for a pretext to insure the co-operation of some other power.

The Emperor Nicholas of Russia, so celebrated for his legitimate tendencies and strict adherence to the faith of treaties, having refused to recognise the dynasty of Bonaparte, or the pretensions of the Queen Isabella of Spain, in preference to the elder branches of the Houses of Bourbon in both countries, was looked upon by the Imperial ruler of France as the first European potentate deserving of special consideration and humiliation; he was accordingly assailed by the aid of England and Sardinia, and humiliated to a degree, that his proud spirit could not withstand—and having died of a broken heart, and his successor having deemed it more prudent to recognise those excluded dynasties than to continue the war, the French Emperor decided on peace without appearing to care much about the feelings of England or Sardinia. The Emperor of Austria being the next advocate for legitimacy and adherence to the treaty of Vienna, the dictates of his destiny induced Napoleon to decide that the necessary steps should be taken for bringing him to reason in like manner, which he undertook with the passive aid of Russia, and the active co-operation of the Sardinian monarch.

The 2nd Act of this Political Melodrama having terminated with equal success, without the professed objects of the war in either case having been attained, Napoleon explained in his private interviews with each of these Emperors, respectively, the incompatibility of Imperial rule in Europe, with freedom of the Press and Constitutional Governments; one or the other must yield—the fate of England was under-  
have been decided. For this purpose the

3rd and last Act was to have been undertaken for the conquest of a barren soil, occupied by a race of barbarians, with the co-operation of the Queen of Spain, an object that could have been accomplished by either nation without difficulty. Her Majesty was reminded by Napoleon of the services he had rendered her with his Imperial brethren of Russia and Austria—of the former alliance of the navies of France and Spain at Trafalgar, and other conflicts with England—which required to be vindicated—of the advantages that must result to both nations from a renewal of that alliance—the extensive sea ports of both countries admitting of the organization of naval forces that must ensure the dominion of the sea—How the conquest of Morocco with all the sea ports on the African shores of the Straits of Gibraltar, in addition to those already possessed by France in the Mediterranean, must contribute to that result—How the gates of the ancient pillars of Hercules would be then closed, and Gibraltar blockaded by sea and land, must be ultimately compelled to surrender, and be restored to the Crown of Spain. To a Queen so renowned for *gallantry*, and a nation so replete with vanity, such a proposition could not fail to excite the most enthusiastic feelings, and to unite all political parties, as in France, in the common cause for the dominion of the seas, and the chastisement of their ancient foes the Moors, the Queen herself offering to lead her armies across the Straits, until reminded by Marshal O'Donnell, her Prime Minister, of the impossibility of a lady in *her present delicate situation* undertaking such a responsibility; but that as the objects contemplated were of such importance to the

honor and interests of Spain, he would himself assume the command, which has been accordingly so settled.

When enthusiastic feelings of this nature have been thus excited, and are well known to prevail throughout the French and Spanish dominions, every reflecting mind must foresee the impossibility of avoiding an impending crisis, every exertion should consequently be made by our rulers to make amends for the numerical inferiority of our naval and military forces compared with those that can be brought to bear upon us by a combination of continental powers. Increasing the destructive powers of weapons of war is generally admitted to be the best mode of making amends for this numerical inferiority; but it unfortunately happens that native talent meets with every discouragement from those nominated by our ruling powers to decide upon questions of this nature; the consequence is, that most valuable inventions in the art of war are frequently driven from our shores to seek that protection abroad which is denied them at home; so it is also with men of military merit, like MacMahon, O'Donnell, and other descendants of Hibernian ancestors, who hold the highest ranks at the present time subjects can enjoy in France and Spain; but who, if they remained in their own country, would in all probability have lived and died unknown and unnoticed.

Even the clergy of our Established Church enter their public protests against such incompetent tribunals as those selected by our naval and military authorities for deciding on improvements in the art of war, as appears by the following extract from a letter addressed by a Hertfordshire incumbent to the

*Times* newspaper on the 26th of last month (October, 1859) under the head of "National Dangers and National Defences." Amongst many other valuable suggestions, this rev. gentleman observes "that the part which science will play in war for the future is confessed by all, and her lessons may be learnt in time of peace if scientific men are allowed a hearing, and not doomed to see their suggestions civilly pooh-poohed, to be reproduced years afterwards by some professional soldier. A standing *mixed* commission to consider the possible military application of all new discoveries, mechanical, chemical, and otherwise, would be well worth its cost. Ordinary official people have neither the time nor the special knowledge requisite for considering the merits of the myriad communications which are constantly made to them, and, consequently, together with ninety-nine absurd proposals, reject summarily the valuable hundredth, unless it fortunately happens to be *fathered by some well-known name*. We want a properly constituted Board to strain out the quackeries and secure the useful hints on so momentous a subject as the national security; and such a Board ought not to be entirely or even mainly military, although it should, of course, contain a military element."

"What the country imperatively requires is security, and a guarantee for security which shall not be purchased by the sacrifice of peaceful habits. We will not for any object become a military people, but we are a martial one and a patriotic one, and we call upon our governors to recognize these facts, and to



harmonize them with a jealous care for the liberty which has made us what we are."

The editor of the *Times*, in an article bearing the same date, in giving a lecture to a cabinet minister at the head of another department for neglect in forwarding the public works confided to his charge, observes that "no wonder people talk of leasing London to Napoleon III. for ten years. Could we be sure of getting rid of our tenant at the end of the term, London would be the gainer. But is not the example of Paris sufficient, and cannot we secure the advantages without the penalty and risk?"

Had the lease thus adverted to been given, it is not improbable that not only would London be a gainer, but that our administrative system in all departments of the State would profit thereby. That due effect would be given to the energies of the nation—That the doors to promotion in the army and navy would be thrown open to merit, instead of being confined as at present to an aristocracy of rank and wealth. Abuses of this nature gave rise to the first French revolution. By their removal France has been placed in the most commanding position of European States. But, as the *Times* justly enquires, why cannot we secure these advantages without incurring the penalties and risk of bringing this child of destiny here? The only answer is that we have still a class who, by commanding majorities in both Houses of Parliament, consider themselves entitled to a monopoly of all lucrative employments in Church and State for themselves, their families, and dependents, the question of competency for the fulfilment of the duties of office, being a matter of secondary

consideration with them, though of paramount importance to the nation at such an impending crisis. A class who fought hard against the removal of religious disabilities, the destruction of rotten boroughs, the removal of their monopoly of human food, by the enactment of laws for restricting its importation, and who only made a virtue of necessity by yielding when the voice of the nation was raised to a pitch of indignation that endangered their existence. It is to be hoped, however, that they will see the necessity of yielding with a good grace under existing circumstances, their own interests being identified with the safety of the State, and preservation of our lives and liberties, for so long as the possession of wealth and influential connections continue to be regarded as the standards of naval and military merit, and the safety of the state made subservient to a class who claim a monopoly of merit, so long will we be exposed to the dangers which now threaten us.

If we are to credit the reports we find in the public papers, there are still individuals to be found in this class who even claim a monopoly of education. The *Times*, for instance, of the 4th of the present month of November, observes, "That some of these gentlemen consider lectures at Mechanics' Institutes as innovations upon Tory traditions greater than a revolution. That we even now meet with some ancient gentleman who has come out for an airing from his old manorial hall, who is staring about the world like one of the seven sleepers, and who offers in conversation the coinage of a former age—who still repeats the phrases that were thought wise and patriotic in his youth, as 'Don't tell me, Sir, about education—

education, Sir, is a humbug. If I were king of this country, Sir, I'd put down the whole thing—it teaches the inferior classes to read the newspapers—to read Mr. John Bright and Richard Cobden, and the newspaper writers themselves, Sir,—every one of whom, Sir, if this country was what it used to be, should be hanged—yes, Sir,—hanged !”

Lord Brougham appears, by his recently-published speeches, to have delivered a lecture to some of these ancient gentlemen, when he held the highest office under the Crown, for their refusal in the House of Lords to extend the franchise to the middle classes, during the progress of the Reform Bill, on which occasion he reminded them “that these classes were the most numerous, and by far the most wealthy order of the community; for if,” said he, “all your lordships’ castles, manors, rights of warren, and rights of chase, with all your broad acres, were brought to the hammer and sold at fifty years’ purchase, the price would fly up and kick the beam, when counterpoised by the vast and solid riches of these middle classes, who are also the genuine depositories of sober, rational, intelligent, and honest English feeling; unable though they may be to round a period and point an epigram, they are solid, right-judging men, and, above all, not given to change. If they have a fault, it is that error on the right side, a suspicion of State quacks—a dogged view of existing institutions—a perfect contempt for all political nostrums. They will neither be led away by false reasoning, nor deluded by impudent flattery; but so neither will they be scared by classical quotations, or brow-beaten by fine sentences, and as for an epigram, they care as little for it as for a cannon ball.

Grave—intelligent—rational—fond of thinking for themselves—they consider a subject long before they make up their minds on it, and the opinions they are thus slow in forming, they are not swift to abandon.”

With such evidence as to the intelligence and valuable acquirements of classes that cannot boast of aristocratic influence or connections, there is little doubt of their being enabled to render essential services to their country at the approaching crisis, by freely enrolling themselves in the army and navy, if they saw the aristocratical barriers to promotion removed, and the doors opened to commissions in both services, as in France, for those who prove themselves most capable of fulfilling the duties required; once that laudable ambition for advancement by merit is recognized, sailors and soldiers would be no longer sought for amongst the dregs of society, on whom little dependence can be placed in time of need.

*The Saturday Review* of the 5th inst. observes, with regard to the navy, “That every ship that is added to the fleet ought to be a fresh warning to the Board of Admiralty against the loitering policy which has led us to the very edge of dangers. The more ships we have, the more men we shall want to turn them to account; yet the Board seems to be complacently counting the vessels which they have to put on the stocks, without stirring a finger to remedy the fatal deficiency of men. They know well that they could not man, in an emergency, the inadequate fleet which is lying in reserve in the dockyards. All men know at last that the defences which are now ready are worse than useless for modern warfare. Time was when leisurely preparations sufficed to meet tardy aggression. But

time has deserted the defence for the attack, and promptitude is henceforth more needful for those who would preserve, than for those who would destroy the peace of the world.

“Everything has been tried, in vain, to keep our fleet properly manned, except the only essential remedy for such an evil—namely—making a proper provision for our sailors. The excitement of war was once relied on to fill our ships in spite of the double wages paid in the merchant service. The Russian campaign settled that point. The war filled the ships it is true, but with a dozen cabmen, ostlers, and tailors, for every seaman that could be tempted to join. It is vain to speculate what may be done, until the Lords of the Admiralty have recognised in the voice of the people the sound which disturbs their repose, and summons them to unwelcome action. As yet they seem a little deafened by the incessant call for “ships.” If they listen more keenly, they will find the cry is changing into “ships and men.” With such plain sailing as they have before them, common sense, one would have thought, might have taught them to anticipate clamour. But that would have been against all traditions of the Board. They seem to consider themselves at liberty to throw all responsibility of action on the public, and to reserve to themselves the privilege of obstruction until the pressure from without becomes too severe to be longer resisted. No minister of any energy would condescend to so cowardly an abdication of his duties.”

In a preceding number of this able publication, the necessity for these precautionary measures is clearly pointed out, and in a manner that must carry

conviction to the minds of all who peruse it, being founded on facts, as regards the feelings of the French people of all classes, which can lead to no other conclusions than that an invasion of England is as certain as "winter to follow autumn."

"On this side of the Channel we are all so heartily anxious to keep out of war, and are so utterly without any intention of quarrelling with France, if we can possibly avoid it, that we can scarcely believe that at this very moment Frenchmen of all ranks and callings speak of an expedition against England as a thing as certain to come soon as "the winter to follow the autumn." All agree, that war will be declared directly the Government is ready, and that the Government is getting ready as fast as possible. We can appeal to the experience of any Englishman who has passed through France or stayed in Paris during the last few weeks, and who is sufficiently acquainted with the people and their language to understand what is passing. An attack on England is the regular theme of conversation in all public conveyances and public places. The army, naturally enough, takes the lead; but it is singular how many classes of persons echo the opinions and wishes of the army. The clergy are, almost to a man, in favour of an attack on the foster-mother of heresy; and the *Univers* speaks of an expedition to pillage the Bank of England, as a hermit of the middle ages, when exhorting Christendom to enter on a crusade for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre. Even the monied classes begin to say that anything would be better than the state of utter stagnation to which they are now condemned by the suspense in which they are kept, that, conse-

quently, the French nation is determined on an expedition which is to cripple England for years to come."

When a nation is thus represented as pregnant with a great coming event, as in cases of a similar nature with individuals, it is but natural to suppose that the crisis must arrive before health and tranquillity of mind are restored; even the lovers of peace in France are consequently of opinion that the sooner that crisis does arrive, the sooner will the public mind settle down to pursuits of a more profitable nature to the community at large, than those which have been so productive of evils to that country, and caused so many widows, orphans, and mutilated limbs under the Napoleon dynasty and Imperial sway during the close of the last and commencement of the present century.

We are informed by an article in *The Naval and Military Gazette*, of the same date as the former of these articles (Nov. 5th)—"That Ireland is to be the spot first selected for the invasion of our shores, and that (in addition to Spain) France and America have concerted their plans for that purpose. That our Government, knowing this, will not allow volunteer corps in Ireland, lest the example for independence of 1782 should be followed. That the Irish in the United States have been long prepared for this opportunity of returning to their native land with the O'Donnells of Spain, the Mac Mahons of France, and other descendants of expatriated ancestors—who never could have expected those rewards for meritorious services at home, which have been conferred by foreign nations for such services. All meritorious individuals, whether distinguished by gallantry in the field, or by scientific

pursuits—in promoting improvements in the art of war, who are unconnected with our ruling classes, being looked upon as interlopers on the inheritance claimed by the scions of nobility, and dependents on those classes who consider themselves as having the exclusive right to all advancement or rewards for public services, whether merited or not, the law which requires head being an exception, or, to use the words of Dickens in his ‘Little Dorrit,’ ‘interlopers of this nature are regarded by those classes as public enemies, more deserving of persecution than reward.’”—A fact that can be verified by cases that will be adverted to in the following pages, to prove the necessity of extensive reforms in the general administration of the affairs of this country, and a more equitable application of the taxes levied on the middle and lower classes than that so much complained of at present, but which cannot be expected so long as the classes, who are the chief recipients of taxes continue to command majorities in both Houses of Parliament.

The following extract of a letter from Mr. Bright to the chairman of a committee of his constituents at Birmingham, may serve to throw some light on this subject. This letter appeared in *The Times* of the 8th of the present month of November :—

“The House of Commons does nothing to check extravagance, it encourages it. Its members are not so much of the tax-paying as of the tax-consuming class. They come from, and they chiefly represent, those whose families have for generations considered the taxation of the people as their lawful patrimony. The eldest of the family takes the estate in land, and the rest of the family occupy their lives mainly in a scramble for their undivided interest in that other estate, contributed yearly by the payers of taxes.

“The House of Commons will not check the extravagance of the administration of the department, and it will not levy the taxes with



any reference to what is just in the imposition to national burdens.

"For sixty years it has levied a heavy probate duty on personal property, from which land and freehold property have been and are now exempt.

"For nearly sixty years it levied a heavy legacy duty on personal property from which land and freehold property were exempt. In the year 1853 it pretended to correct this injustice as regards the legacy duty, by imposing a succession tax on land and freehold property, but it did this in a way to charge land and freehold property not more than one-fourth of the amount which is charged on all other [kinds of property. This succession tax was to have raised two millions sterling a-year; up to this time, I believe, it has not reached £800,000 in any one year.

"The whole taxation of the country last year exceeded 65 millions sterling. Of this vast sum, not 10 millions were raised by taxes affecting only the possessors of the visible property of the country.

"The Customs and Excise alone raised more than 42,000,000*l.*, collected on articles the great bulk of which is consumed by that portion of the population which has no property but its labour, and no income but its wages, and which, as might be expected from the fact just stated, has no voice in parliament, and is wholly without representation in the government of the country,

"The Parliament (I speak of the two Houses) is a Parliament of the rich, it has no immediate interest in economy, or in equal taxation. It is powerful enough to secure to the class which it really represents, the patronage and the emoluments which are to be disposed of, in the spending of the vast sums which find their way into the national exchequer. What can I do? What can any single member of Parliament do? I can protest,—I can prescribe for your grievance! I can denounce the wrong! I can say that a Government thus unjust will some day be overthrown. But all this, and much more, will not loosen the grasp of the insatiable hand against whose extortion you complain.

"So long as the middle class of our population will tolerate a system of mock representation, based on the coercion of county constituencies, and the corruption of the boroughs; so long as the power of the great proprietors of the soil in the one case, and the power of money in the other, return an overwhelming majority of the House of Commons,—so long there can be no hope of any economical administration, and of a just distribution of the public burden; and so long as the millions of

workmen, whose toil and skill produce all the wonders of which our national industry can boast, are purposely and insultingly excluded from any direct and legal influence in the election of members of Parliament, so long they may and must bear a load of taxation wholly beyond their means to support.

“Our rich class is the richest in Europe ; the administration of the country is in its hands, and a greater proportion of the heaviest taxation in the world is thrown upon the class possessing no property but its labour and wages than is the case in any other country with whose system of taxation we are acquainted.

“What is the remedy ? It is to be found only in a change in the authority by which taxes are levied and the public funds expended. A monarch solely, or a monarch and an aristocracy, or both, working with a mock representation, never did, and never can give any security for economy in governments, or for a just imposition of public burdens. They are admirable institutions, uncontrolled, to enrich the rich ; and an aristocracy working with, and through a mock representation, is the most complete instrument ever devised to squeeze wealth from the toil of a nation under the pretence of governing it.

“Let the householders of England, Scotland, and Ireland, let the heads of families, let those who form the nation speak through fairly chosen representatives in Parliament, and justice in raising taxes, and economy in spending them may be hoped for. I shall do all I can in favour of this justice and this economy, but every effort will be in vain until the public purse is taken from the custody of a class, and placed under the safe keeping of the people.”

With such evidence from one of the most enlightened of our legislators, as to the consequences of the monopoly of legislation by a class who look upon the taxes levied on the people as their lawful patrimony, and that class by far the least competent, the least intelligent, and the least wealthy of the community, as they have been told in the foregoing lecture delivered to them in their own House of Parliament, by Lord Brougham, it is not to be wondered at that such a want of confidence in our rulers, and such a consequent apprehension of danger should now be

so manifest. No time should be lost under such circumstances, in making amends for the numerical inferiority of our forces by sea and land, and other defects so ably exposed by the *Saturday Review*, and other able publications, organising such with our most efficient officers wherever they are to be found, whether on half-pay or retired from the service altogether, and arming them with the most improved weapons of war, increasing the destructive powers of such weapons, being the most effective mode of attaining that end.

That much time has been lost by giving a committee of Artillery officers at Woolwich the exclusive power to decide on questions of this nature has been proved in a variety of cases, owing to our having civilians at the head of the army and navy, who cognizant of their own incompetency, leave the responsibility on others, who have the reputation of being jealous of officers in other branches of the service laying claim to improvements which they are of opinion should have been foreseen by themselves ; such claimants, as observed by Dickens, are regarded as common enemies, and the wet blanket thrown over their propositions until the proper time should arrive for their resuscitation under other names, even those of foreigners, are sometimes looked upon as preferable to native officers, unless they should happen to belong to that corps which has for so long a period retained a monopoly of long ranges.

Amongst various cases of this nature, that which relates to the most valuable of recent improvements in giving musketry a claim to a length of range never attained before, appears the most deserving of notice.

Captain Norton, an old infantry officer of the Peninsular war, whose experience during that war enabled him to see the great waste of ammunition occasioned by the defects in our old smooth-barrelled muskets ; and conceiving himself for that reason to be a better judge of the mode of remedying such defects, than those Artillery or Staff officers who had never stood beside an infantry soldier in action, and he accordingly pointed them out to the War Department, who referred him to this Woolwich committee thirty-five years since, after having proved by various trials in Ireland, his native land, as well as in India, and in this country the most satisfactory results. That by substituting elongated projectiles for round shot, and propelling them through rifled barrels, the concussion of the gunpowder on the ductile metal would cause it to expand into the spiral grooves, and with half the usual quantity of powder, produce more than quadruple the range and certainty of effect, all loss of power by windage being thus provided against.

The idea was admitted to be original, but the effect was ridiculed, and the proposition, though repeatedly made, was as repeatedly rejected. Even after the late General Jacob, of the East India Company's Service, had taken it in hand, and proved, beyond the possibility of doubt, its great superiority over round shot and smooth barrels—but the decision of a Woolwich Committee once pronounced can never be reversed—so far their cannon laws resemble those of the Medes and Persians. This valuable proposition would consequently have remained under the wet blanket to the present time in all probability, had not the publicity given to the trials made by Norton and Jacob

attracted the attention of our recent allies, the French, who manage matters of this nature by a class of officers very different from those employed by us; regiments in France having been armed with rifle barrels, and these elongated projectiles before our people appeared to have been aware of it, it was only when we were threatened with a trial on our own shores of the effects of such weapons, that the nation was roused to a sense of its dangers; aided by the celebrated letter of the Duke of Wellington, as to the probable consequences of such an untoward event. The Woolwich Committee then made a virtue of necessity, and recognised as a foreign invention what was in reality due to native genius, and although these facts had been repeatedly proved by various letters and official documents, published by Captain Norton, including a letter addressed to him by Lord Ross (who as President of the Royal Society cannot be regarded as a mean authority), bearing testimony to the fact of his having witnessed at his seat in Ireland, a variety of successful trials made by Captain Norton upwards of thirty years ago, with these elongated projectiles.

Documents of this description were not, however, likely to be noticed by the Woolwich Committees, calculated as they were to expose acts of injustice, not only towards Captain Norton, but to the nation they so long deprived of the benefit of such an important improvement. Not only has this injustice been perpetrated, but an attempt has been apparently made to have it perpetuated, if we may judge from an official letter which was published in the *Times* of the 20th of December, 1856, giving the benefit of this improve-

ment to a Birmingham gunmaker, who, appears by this letter to have submitted his claim to that Committee twenty years previously, it must consequently have lain under the wet blanket during that time. How this gunmaker came to remain silent for twenty years does not appear; but as this letter is a reply addressed to Lord Panmure, as Secretary for War, in 1856, its readers must draw their own conclusions—the letter must speak for itself.

“Lord Panmure being desirous of rewarding the ingenuity displayed in the first suggestion (1836) of the principle of expansion as applied to bullets, although their adoption is not considered to be due to your communication of that period as reported by the Ordnance Select Committee, his Lordship has, with the concurrence of the Lords of the Treasury, sanctioned a reward of £1,000 as a public recognition of your priority in bringing the invention before the War Department.

“To Mr. Greener. (Signed) F. PÆEL.”

Here we have a tardy recognition of the priority of Mr. Greener's claim over that of the French Captain Minié, whose name it bore when adopted by us, but no reason assigned for the unaccountable oversight that caused it to remain twenty years under the wet blanket, or for the ignoring altogether the fact of Captain Norton's pretensions being of so many years prior date to either.

Other improvements in fuses, concussion shells, &c., were claimed by Captain Norton, which were tried at Woolwich, and on board Her Majesty's ship “The Excellent” and rejected, but afterwards adopted by Government under other names. In the Mechanics'

Magazine of the last and present month a case of this nature is noticed, and the name of the officer given who was rewarded for a concussion shell of Captain Norton's invention tried under his superintendence. This allegation, if unfounded, ought to be contradicted with equal publicity; if true, it should be noticed by the proper authorities.

Sir William Armstrong's improvements in the application of elongated projectiles to rifled ordnance, were submitted to the Woolwich Committee, at the commencement of the late Russian war, by whom it met with a like cold reception, having been placed under the "wet blanket," until forced on their attention by repeated trials which proved their great value. An establishment at Woolwich has been accordingly ceded to him for the manufacture of his guns and recently by his desire placed out of the control of *the authorities there*.

Rivalling Parkins's steam gun, by enabling one man to discharge upwards of one hundred shots per minute, by gunpowder from a light gun carriage, an advantage that could not be claimed by the steam-gun which was not portable, neither could its continuous discharges be maintained beyond a few minutes, hours being then required to get the steam up again to a pressure of five or six hundred pounds on the square inch, is another improvement due to Sir John Scott Lillie, who was likewise a most distinguished officer of the Peninsular war.

This proposition is said, nevertheless, to have been treated like that of Captain Norton, although it appears by a report recently published, that at a trial before that Committee, one hundred and twenty

shots per minute were discharged and maintained by a given number of men, and the substitution of machinery for manual labour, an advantage either on shore or on board ship, whereby ample amends would be made for our numerical inferiority compared with the numbers that may be brought to bear upon us when we least expect it. If this engine of war had, as stated in that published report, the additional advantage of being as easily transported as a 3-pounder, its continuous showers of lead would be much more serviceable in clearing our streets of dense masses of an enemy than our Volunteer Rifles or even Artillery. Should our cities and towns be doomed to visitations of this nature, we ought surely to be prepared with the most destructive engines for their expulsion.

Allegations of this nature cannot at such an impending crisis but be deserving of notice, either by the representatives of the people, who have so much at stake, or by those to whom the administration of their affairs have been confided. The energies of the people require to be roused at such a crisis by the influence of the press, as pointed out by the following extract from an article in *The Times* of the 12th instant, in which the success of raw levies, when directed with energy and zeal, as proved in the United States of America against Wellington's veterans in 1814—where the best men are selected for the right places, and where no class legislation or influences are allowed to interpose to the detriment of the State:—

“The influence of the Press in overthrowing our effete army system, and more recently in rousing the people to a sense of their own duties in defending the country, is too remarkable to be passed over without some words of comment. The example of the American States, where the regular army, numbering only a few thousands,



is posted on the extreme verge of civilization, and where the real defence of the country is entrusted to the militia, could not be without its effect on any thinking man, who was free from professional prejudices. In that land of energy and self-dependence a young man looks upon himself as disgraced, unless he belongs to some body more or less military in its organization. It may be a regiment of volunteers, or it may be only a fire-company ; but the practice of associating in masses for service of various kinds gives to the whole people a facility in learning the art of war which is one of the best possessions of a nation. The services of the American Militia in past times are too well known to be referred to. In the war of 1814 they were found to be fully equal to regular troops ; and, indeed, the best soldiers of Wellington's Peninsular army were, over and over again, defeated by these levies, whose skill in the use of fire-arms fully made up for any want of mechanical precision in movement. Wherever a fortification, either natural or artificial, gave the Americans assistance, their murderous fire, directed mainly against the officers of the British force, generally ended in securing them the advantage. Since that time war has become more and more a matter of individual skill in the use of the rifle. The rifle, it is confessed, won the Battle of Inkermann, where men fought by sixes and sevens, and all elaborate movements were impossible. There can be no doubt that the well-trained rifleman is now a much more equal match for the professional soldier than was the case forty years ago, and that such men as form the mass of the American Volunteers could be converted into an effective army in the course of a very few weeks."

When, in addition to this, *The Times*, in its leading article of the 15th instant, gives the most conclusive evidence as to the present excited feelings that prevail throughout France as regards the approaching war with this country, stimulated, not only by the daily press, but by pamphlets evidently put forward by the ruling powers, as was recently the case preparatory to the war with Austria, the conclusion is naturally arrived at that, "as the hatreds and passions of mankind are more easily stimulated than allayed,

war is inevitable, and thus we are forced to act as if the Camp of Boulogne was formed again, and the fleets of France only waiting the orders of its Imperial master!" We have, therefore, no time to lose in making preparations, and it is to be hoped that every inducement will be offered to enterprising men to enter the service of their country, and to obtain promotion, without the aid of money or influential connections. That advancement by purchase, and even by seniority, will be done away with in a case of such emergency, as if promotion is insured to merit, as it should be, we will then see men rising to station and rank, as Garibaldi, of European renown, did recently in Italy, and as Hodgson would have done in India, had not the rules of the service precluded him (like other subalterns during the Peninsular war) from advancement that would have been insured for such services in any other army.

As the object of this publication is to expose the defects of such a system, in the hope of obtaining a change beneficial to the nation by the aid of public opinion, the following extracts from a work lately published on the injustice experienced by Captain Hodgson, whose transcendent talents as a military leader has been for such a series of years overlooked, because he held no higher rank than that of subaltern, and only attained the rank of captain by seniority on a death vacancy, shortly before he received his mortal wound.

An officer on service in India with Hodgson (as reported in this memoir) says, "Hodgson's gallant deeds more resemble a chapter from the life of Bayard or Amadis de Gaul, than the doings of a subaltern

of the nineteenth century. The only feeling mixed up with my admiration for him is envy."

General Bernard, under whom he served, expressed "his regret that Hodgson was not a captain that he might reward his merits by the promotion he so well deserved."

Sir T. Seaton says, "Hodgson's courage and conduct is the admiration of all; how he gets through the work and fatigue is marvellous. He has the soundest heart and clearest head of any man in the camp. But his great fête was that of taking the King of Delhi with 100 men against 5,000 or 6,000, and lodging him a prisoner in that city. When he delivered over his prize to the civil officer, Mr. Saunders, the latter was so astonished that he exclaimed, "By Jove, Hodgson! they ought to make you commander-in-chief for this."

Mr. Montgomerie, Chief Commissioner of Oude, writes:—

"My dear Hodgson,

"All honor to you and your Horse for catching the King and slaying his sons, who committed such atrocities on our helpless women and children. I hope you will bag more of them.

"Yours, &c.

"R. MONTGOMERIE."

"He seemed to friends and foes to have borne a charmed life, his judgment was as great as his courage, and the heavier the fire, and the greater the difficulty, the more calm and reflecting he became. This was the man who complained of seeing easy-going Majors of Brigade, Aides-de-Camp, and Staff Officers, all getting Brevets, and made C.B.'s, for simply being in

Camp, and doing duty mildly, and frequently as mere spectators, while he, as a subaltern, foresaw none of these advantages for himself, until the death vacancy in his regiment shortly before his own decease."

This memoir concludes by observing that "it will doubtless excite surprise, and perchance indignation, that one whom the Commander-in-Chief pronounced the most brilliant soldier under his command, and whom all looked upon as the most skilful of their leaders, one whom the popular voice had ennobled amongst the heroes of the nation, should have received no mark of his Sovereign's approbation—no recognition of his gallant services and deeds of daring, one tenth part of which would have covered one of *fortune's favorites* with ample rewards, and insured ample advancement. That recognition, however, which was officially withheld, has been given in a more marked form, by the spontaneous expression of the feelings of his brethren in arms, who formed a Committee at Calcutta, for the purpose of recording by a permanent memorial, in the form of a monument at Lichfield Cathedral, to his memory."

If we expect deeds of such a heroic nature to be emulated by future Hodgsons in this country, when surrounded, as he was in India, by impending dangers, it is to be hoped that all such barriers as were opposed to his advancement may be removed in time, and others thus invited to follow his example.

When we have seen officers and soldiers receive medals for Waterloo, who had been in England at the time it was fought—and an entire division who had been upwards of twenty miles from the scene of action, and did not know of its having been fought until the

following day,—and officers' servants and other non-combatants decorated for their distinguished conduct in more recent battles, in which they had not been even exposed to fire while attending their master's baggage, often out of hearing of the guns,—and when we find even civilians decorated with the most honourable *military order* of the Bath, and such a man as Hodgson going to his grave undecorated and unrewarded, while those, as he stated himself, who had been passive spectators of his heroic deeds, were decorated and promoted for services to which he so mainly contributed, a better comment could not be adduced as to the absurdity of a system that would sanction such acts of justice. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

A correspondence having reference to rival claimants to certain improvements in the art of war, had been inserted in former editions of this publication, but as the question at issue had been finally settled against one of the parties, by the opinion of Counsel, and as the result cannot be a matter of public moment, it has been omitted; we will therefore proceed to a published report (which followed that correspondence) of a lecture delivered at Willis's Rooms, last year, after the closing for the season of the lecture room, at the United Service Institution, where the lecturer, Mr. Boucher, a gentleman of considerable scientific attainments, had been in the habit of enlightening the members of that institution on military and naval topics.

## MINIÉ RIFLE, A MISNOMER.

### CAPTAIN NORTON'S CLAIM TO THE MERIT OF THIS IMPROVEMENT IN THE ART OF WAR PLACED BEYOND DOUBT.

" At the lecture recently delivered at Willis's Rooms on Minié bullets, wooden plugs, &c., by Mr. Boucher, formerly of the 5th Dragoon Guards, we are happy to find that certain facts transpired which place the claims of our gallant countryman, Captain Norton, over the French Captain Minié, to the invention of the most perfect system of elongated projectiles beyond all manner of doubt. That lecture was presided over by Colonel Sykes, M.P., and was numerously attended by Officers of the Army, and the leading gun firms of the Metropolis.

" The Lecturer commenced by observing that new doctrines are frequently based on false foundations, which proved to have been the case with what is termed the Minié principle, which consisted in the introduction of iron cups into cavities at the flat end of elongated projectiles, with a view of causing an expansion of the lead into the grooves of the barrel, this alleged improvement we immediately adopted, as a *foreign invention*, when the Duke of Wellington expressed such apprehension of a French invasion shortly before his death, when our smooth barrels and spherical balls would in addition to the numerical inferiority of our army have exposed us to a degree of danger that threatened most serious results. During the Crimean Campaign however it appeared that those iron cups were productive of greater evils than those they proposed to remedy, as they were driven through the softer metal by the force of the gunpowder, leaving the lead behind stuck so fast in the barrel as to render it useless for the remainder of the day.

" After fifty millions of these iron cups had been ordered and manufactured by Greenfield, of Broad Street, Golden Square, our wise acres of the War Department set to work in forming wooden plugs as substitutes, on the merits of which, from the following observations of the lecturer, the authorities of the Hythe School of Musketry, and those of

the Ordnance Department at Enfield, differed. 'In the laboratory at Woolwich, ten machines were erected for making box-wood plugs at the rate of 300,000 per diem. We apply to Colonel Wilford of the Hythe School for information as to their intended use, he tells us that for three years he has been teaching his pupils that they are expanding agents for rifle bullets. Feeling somewhat doubtful on this point, we turn to Colonel Dixon of the Enfield School, he shakes his head and thinks that they are only useful in protecting the edges of the bullets from collapsing. In this dilemma an appeal to the bullets themselves after having been discharged, and by signs which are far more intelligible than the most elaborate explanations of the Minié advocates, they declare that Colonel Dixon is to a certain extent right, that Colonel Wilford totally wrong, as only about one-third of them do even the duty of protectors, consequently two-thirds of these machines are working in vain, thus, out of the millions that are made, and the thousands of public money expended, not one plug does the duty assigned to it.'

"After adverting to a variety of other interesting facts to prove the incompetency of our Military Authorities, and the consequent waste of public money, the Chairman complimented the lecturer on the light he had thrown on so valuable an improvement as the Rifle invented by Captain Minié, to whom the Military world stood so much indebted, and begged at the same time to observe that he took no part in the controversy between the parties adverted to by the lecturer, as he merely presided in order that important questions should be elucidated by free discussion, on which, Major General Sir John Scott Lillie begged to remind the gallant chairman, as the elucidation of truth appeared to be the object of the meeting, that nothing could be more at variance with that object than giving the merits of this great improvement in the art of War to Captain Minié, or any other foreigner, unless Irishmen were still considered aliens, as he perceived at the further end of the room a gallant countryman of his and old brother campaigner of the Peninsular War, Captain Norton, to whom all the merits of elongated shot and shell were due, as proved by his having submitted them to the authorities at Woolwich long before they were ever adopted or devised in France, a fact proved also by the evidence of Lord Rosse, late President of the Royal Society, who witnessed various trials by Captain Norton, at his seat in Ireland, upwards of 30 years ago, of these elongated projectiles, which had

been rejected by our Military authorities, and only adopted as foreign importations when approved of and introduced to the French Army.

“ As regarded the controversy between the advocates of iron and wooden plugs for these projectiles, Sir John observed that having himself commanded a Rifle Corps during the Peninsular War, and having subsequently directed his attention to the improvement of elongated projectiles, his opinion was that all advocates for expanding the lead by plugs or cups were in error, as the solid bullets he found by experience required no such factitious aids, the action of the gunpowder gas on its explosion being quite sufficient to force the lead into the spiral grooves of the barrel, as originally proved by Captain Norton, all deviations were consequently only iron or wooden masks to cover the piracy, and afford pretexts for rewarding pirates. The gallant Chairman apologized to Captain Norton for his ignorance of these facts, an animated discussion then ensued in which the gun-trade took a part, some of whom having declared that they had Captain Norton's original solid projectiles, as then described, in their possession for upwards of 30 years, and they could only attribute their rejection by the authorities at Woolwich to an indisposition to recognize any improvement in the art of war not emanating from themselves, and an apprehension that improvements in rifle shooting would throw field artillery into the shade by depriving them of the monopoly of long ranges which they heretofore enjoyed. When Captain Minié was rewarded by his government for covering his piracy of Captain Norton's projectiles by an iron mask, and when the war department rewarded a favored candidate with a large sum of money for taking off this iron mask and leaving this elongated projectile as originally devised by Captain Norton, and another candidate in like manner rewarded with public money for devising wooden plugs for expanding purposes for which they have proved quite useless.—It was a reflection upon our Military Authorities to have it said that the gallant veteran to whom all the merit of the original idea is so justly due, should still remain disregarded and unrewarded. But it unfortunately happens that the advocates of the *Dowb School*, and of the *Woolwich Committees*, consider it preferable to persevere in error



than to recognize an act of injustice which would be construed into an admission of their incompetency or disinclination to appreciate the merits of Captain Norton's valuable improvements when first laid before them. We must however hope for the honor of the country, that the House of Commons will no longer tolerate a system which rendered us the laughing-stock, during the Crimean War, of the French army, where merit alone is recognized, and an administrative system established, which we would do well to substitute for our circumlocution system."

THIS circumlocution system has been portrayed in such an amusing manner by Dickens in his "Little Dorrit" as to lead to the belief that it had been in a great degree dictated by the cases herein adverted to, and as Europe is now threatened with a convulsion that may require the employment of our armies again in the field it may not be deemed inappropriate to remind some of our legislators as well as our rulers of the evils of a system under which so many thousands of our brave Soldiers perished in the Crimea, rotting in the trenches for want of food and clothing while there was a superabundance of both rotting at Balaclava, a few miles distant, owing to the want of a head and a proper administrative system to superintend the formation of proper roads, while the weather was fine, for its transport during the winter season, when, without such roads, the regular supplies of these necessities of life became impossible. It was proved before the Sebastopol Committee, that there were abundance of *tools, hands, materials* and *time* for the formation of this road, but such were the evils of the circumlocution system, that either the necessity was not foreseen, or, if it was, no one knew whose business it was to superintend or order its formation; some alleged that it was the duty of the Chief

Engineer, who as a necessary consequence of the oversight was shortly after the enquiry before that committee created a Baronet, this being considered by the circumlocution office quite *en regle*.

To revert however to Dickens and his description of that office as the school for our young Statesmen and official Characters—and of the delays and difficulties which beset those unhappy mortals who have business to transact at our Public offices, and particularly those whose object is to introduce improvements in the Art of War calculated to disturb the existing order of things, or to call for that display of scientific acquirement so frequently found wanting in those whose duty it is to decide upon questions of this nature:—

“A Man of Genius,” he observes, “perfects an invention of great public utility, at a considerable expence of time and money, and addresses himself to the Government.

“The moment he does so, he becomes a public offender. He ceases to be an innocent Citizen. He becomes a Culprit—is made to feel as if he were committing an offence. In dancing attendance at the Public Offices he is always treated as a Criminal.

“After interminable waitings in the Ante-chambers, and unceasing Correspondence, infinite impertinences, ignominies, and insults, a minute is at length made, No. 2472, allowing the Culprit to make certain trials at his own expense.

“How the trials are made in the presence of a Board of six, of whom two ancient members are too blind to see it—two others too deaf to hear it—another too lame to get near it—and the final ancient member too pigheaded to look at it.

“How there were more queries, more impertinences, ignominies, and insults.

“How another minute was made, No. 5703, whereby they resigned the business to the Circumlocution Office.—How this office, in course of time, took up the business as if it had been new, and

never heard of before. Muddled it—addled it—and tossed it in a wet blanket.

“How there was a reference to the Barnacles and Stillstalkers, who knew nothing about it—into whose heads nothing could be hammered about it—who had got bored about it—and had reported Physical Impossibilities about it.

“How the Circumlocution Office, in a minute, No. 8740, saw no reason to revise the decision already given.

“How the Circumlocution Office, being reminded that no decision had been given, shelved the business.

“How there had been a final interview with the Head of the Department that very morning, and how the Brazen Head had spoken, and had been, upon the whole, and under all the circumstances, looking at it from the various points of view, of opinion, that one of two courses should be pursued in respect of the business—that was to say, either to begin it all over again, or to let it alone for evermore. The great art being, not to aid in demonstrating how the thing *was to be done*, but to devise the means, ‘*How not to do it.*’ ”

In another portion of this work, Dickens describes the “Barnacles,” above referred to, as “Parasitical Shell-fish, which adhere with great tenacity to the bottom of Ships,” eating them through until “the water enters, and the ship founders,” and when the Barnacles are reminded of the injury they are doing to the Great State Ship, their reply is, that “it is their business to stick to the Ship as long as they can. If the Ship goes down, that is the Ship’s look out, and not theirs.”

The evils of this vicious system of divided responsibility, had already been exposed by Junius, in such appropriate terms, as to render it necessary to quote them also, in the hope that this vicious system may be at length changed.

This able writer, in more serious language, tells us that,

"The undue influence of a vicious system of administration answers every purpose of arbitrary power, with an expence and oppression, that would be unnecessary in arbitrary government. The best of our Ministers find it the easiest and most compendious mode of conducting the affairs of a Nation, and all Ministers have a general interest in adhering to a system, which is of itself sufficient to support them in Office, without any aid from personal merit—popularity—labour—abilities—or experience. It promises every gratification to avarice and ambition, and secures impunity. These truths are unquestionable. If they make no impression, it is because they are too vulgar and notorious. But when, at length, the indifference of the people has continued too long, they must be roused to a sense of their danger."

It is singular that ever since the days of such an able expositor of abuses as Junius, we should still continue this vicious system of divided responsibility, because it has the merit of screening men in office and rendering it as difficult to lay the finger on the real delinquents, as at the game of thimble rig to point out the thimble under which the pea is to be found.

Lord Derby, who was a member of the Whig administration that carried the reform bill of 1832, compared his associates, at a subsequent period, to a set of *thimble riggers*, and assigned that as his reason for retiring from office. As this noble Lord is now Prime Minister of the Tory reform administration of 1859, it is to be hoped this thimble-rigging system of divided responsibility will be got rid of, and amongst other abuses that require reform, those of the administrative systems in our naval and war departments will not be overlooked, as we cannot expect in the event of another European war to be so fortunate as to get such men as Wellington and Nelson to guide our armies and navies to such victories as those which may be

considered as having saved Europe from the dominion of the first Napoleon. Had it not been for such master minds the great vessel of the State would in all probability (as described by Dickens) have foundered from the host of Barnacles by which its bottom had been encumbered.

The intervention of Steam, and the great improvements in implements of war, have so completely altered our naval and military tactics since then as to render it still more encumbent on the government of this country to endeavour by all possible means to increase the destructive powers of our war engines, so as to make amends for the numerical inferiority of our naval and military forces compared with those of any combination of continental powers by which we have been and may still be menaced. So neglectful however have we been in this respect that, incredible as it may appear, the improvements in rifle ordnance of Sir William Armstrong, and in rifle batteries by Sir John Lillie, which had been brought under the notice of our Military authorities in 1854, at the commencement of the Russian war, were treated with the same indifference as Captain Norton's elongated projectiles for rifle barrels had been thirty years previously—and will in all probability be adopted by the Russian and French armies, as these projectiles had been, before they are adopted by us, as it is only now in 1859 that the force of public opinion appears to have compelled our rulers to turn their attention to the value of these latter improvements, all of which can be proved should the expected enquiry before a parliamentary committee take place. It will then be shown how these veterans of the Peninsula war had been treated after having acquired as regimental officers in many a hard

fought field the knowledge by which they wished their country to be benefitted.

Regimental officers, it should be observed, acquire an experience in war very different from that acquired by staff officers, who are generally looked upon as passive spectators of the active operations and deeds of arms of regimental officers and soldiers, who are in reality the fighting men, and who should consequently be more relied on for discovering the defects of implements of war than passive spectators who not unfrequently require the aid of telescopes to enable them to judge of the probable result of these sanguinary encounters, in which it was proved, by the returns of killed and wounded during that protracted war compared with the ammunition expended by the respective armies engaged, that from 3000 to 4000 shots had been fired for one that took effect.

It might be difficult to account for the fact, that improvements of this important character in small arms should have been exposed for so many years, in the very land which gave them birth, to such culpable neglect, were it not notorious, that public bodies, as well as private individuals, frequently prefer their personal interests to the public good.

Field Artillery, for instance, has heretofore enjoyed a monopoly of throwing projectiles into the columns of a enemy, at ranges varying from half a mile to a mile, which is about as far as men can discern with the naked eye on a clear day, and without that smoke and confusion inseparable from battle-fields, whereas infantry soldiers armed with the old smooth barrels, could not fire with any effect at greater ranges than 200 or 300 yards.

Thus Field Artillery had a monopoly of power at long

ranges, to which musketry could not aspire, and accordingly, the monopolists of such ranges held their heads proportionally high.

Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that improvements in small arms, which would enable infantry to do greater execution than Field Artillery, should be looked upon with jealousy by those monopolists, and that Ordnance Committees would, for that very reason, be unlikely to foster such improvements.—That these improvements in Rifle-shooting would have the effect, not only of doing greater execution against enemy's columns, but against their Field Artillery, has been proved in the most unquestionable manner, at the School of Musketry at Hythe, where targets, representing Field Artillery, had every man and horse perforated by these elongated projectiles in less time than a gun could be dismounted by round shot.

Rifle practice, however, at targets, on field-days, is very different from rifle-shooting in action with an enemy. Human nerves are liable to unsteadiness, more especially when men are exhausted by fatigue, and encumbered by arms, ammunition, and accoutrements, and when shot and shells are dealing death around—disadvantages to which Field Artillery, resting on gun carriages, is not liable.

The remedy for these disadvantages having been duly considered by an officer of such distinction and experience as Sir John Scott Lillie, he proposed to obviate them, by placing a given number of these improved weapons, at eight to ten inches apart, on gun carriages, and causing them to be discharged, by the substitution of machinery for manual labour—thus enabling a given number of men

to do more execution than ten times that number, armed with the same weapons in the ordinary manner.

This very simple proposition, intelligible to the plainest understanding, met with the unqualified approval of the late Lord Hardinge, when Commander-in-chief at the commencement of the late war with Russia, and of Mr. Sydney Herbert, then Secretary at War.

Had these heads of departments possessed the powers over the ordnance department, subsequently (as Secretary of State for war) conferred on Lord Panmure, no doubt can be entertained that our army in the Crimea would have been provided with these destructive weapons, as well as that subsequently employed in India, where such amends for our numerical inferiority would have been so advantageous and have saved so many valuable lives of both sexes, sacrificed by this incapacity, as to our circumlocution system was added that of unnecessary circumnavigation.

This case may consequently be cited as an additional instance of the evils of divided responsibility, as portrayed by Dickens, for when Sir John Lillie's propositions were referred by Mr. Sydney Herbert to the Lieutenant General of the Ordnance, at the commencement of the Crimean war, with a private letter urging despatch, nothing could be done without a reference to Woolwich, where, in the course of time, it was duly transmitted, accompanied by this private letter; but it would seem that the word "despatch" is little understood at Woolwich, for, after lying there six weeks, it was discovered to have been addressed to the wrong Committee, whose Chairman, though he was also Chairman of the *right* Committee, directed its return to the Lieutenant General of the ord-



nance, to have it re-addressed to him as Chairman of the right Committee, which, according to the usual system of routine and circumlocution, occasioned much additional delay. Thus exemplifying the saying of Moliere, "That it were better that a hundred patients should perish according to routine and the prescribed rules of medicine, than that one should be saved by any other means."

So much for "despatch," at a period so urgent as that of the war that had then been declared against Russia, when expedition was an object. Several weeks more were nevertheless permitted to elapse before the Chairman considered himself justified in bringing under the notice of the Committee a proposal which would have the effect of eclipsing Field Artillery, in the event of the trial solicited being at all commensurate with that already made by the Gun-makers, Messrs. Deane and Adams.

Various meetings and discussions followed. The advocates of progress urging despatch, and a trial thus solicited for the *good of the country*, as the primary consideration at such a period, while their opponents of the Barnacle school stood out for routine and circumlocution for *the honour of the Artillery*.

The poetic effusion for which a noble Lord, one of the Derby cabinet, got such credit from the noble scions of the Barnacle school

" Let England's trade and wealth and commerce die,  
But save! oh save! our old nobility,"

would by the alteration of the last word be applicable to this case,

Let England's trade and wealth and commerce die,  
But save, oh save! our old *Artillery*.

The result was, as might have been expected, that the Barnacles were triumphant, and a report having been made, that engines of war of this description were "complicated, and far inferior to Shrapnell shells and volleys of Musketry."

This report being so much at variance with the opinions expressed by various eminent gun makers, particularly by Dean and Adams, the most eminent of our manufacturers of revolving fire arms, who had proved by practical demonstration that with ten men more execution could be done in action by this means than by one hundred men armed with the most improved rifles, whereby 90 per cent. would be virtually added to our forces in the field. A battery having been prepared by them, in a rough manner, with some of their ready made rifles, and a trial made, the result of which they reported to have far exceeded even this calculation. This report was forwarded to the War Department, over which the Duke of Newcastle then presided, as the first Secretary of State for war, an office intended to control all branches of the army, and to put an end to that divided responsibility so detrimental to the public service.

It was then it appears referred by His Grace to the Lieut. General of the Ordnance for his opinion as to the course he would recommend to be pursued between two reports so conflictory—The one being that of a firm practically conversant with every thing relating to small arms, and the other by a committee of Artillery officers, conversant with great guns and Shrapnell shells.

The Lieutenant General, as a matter of course, decided in favor of the committee for the honor of the Artillery, but the Duke of Newcastle was unable to understand

how a theoretical report could take precedence of one founded on practical demonstration, and notice having been given that the question would be brought before the House of Commons, the Duke, and his colleague, Mr. Sydney Herbert, who were the responsible authorities, decided, for that and other reasons, on abolishing the offices of Master General, and Lieutenant General, of the Ordnance, and placing that department under the immediate control of the Secretary of State for war.

This notice was accordingly withdrawn, and a battery ordered to be constructed, at Woolwich, for the purpose of testing the effects of this new war engine, as compared with Shrapnell shells.

The authorities at Woolwich however were in no hurry for any such mode of settling the question, and Lord Panmure having succeeded to office as Secretary of State for war, they knew that they had neither a Wellington nor a Peel, nor even a Peelite, to deal with, and they accordingly reported, after a further six months' delay, that it was *impossible* for them to construct the battery.

A similar order was then sent to Enfield, where immense sums had been expended through the ordnance department, in the erection of machinery for small arms, when, after a similar delay, a similar reply was made.

A battery was however at length constructed in rather a rude maner, by gunmakers, engineers, and men of all work in London, and confided to the care of the select committee for the purpose of being placed on one of their gun carriages, and making all other necessary arrangements for the proposed trial, which was, in fact, placing in the hands of one of the parties to these conflicting reports,

the power to decide which was right and which was wrong. *The right committee and the wrong committee were thus judges and jurors in their own cause.*

Here we have the controlling power over the ordnance department so successfully contended for by the Duke of Newcastle and the Peelites, as advocates of progress and despatch, virtually overturned by the patrons of the "Dowbs," "Barnacles," and advocates of circumnavigation, circumlocution and delay, who gave the option to the select committee to prove their own case, if they had any confidence in it.—If not, to throw the wet blanket over the whole affair, as Dickens said, until it should be resuscitated in a foreign land, as was the case with the improvements of Captain Norton, and others. According to the information obtained by the writer of these observations on various points herein adverted to, from a friend of his at Woolwich, who advocated the merits of these batteries before the committee there, the reply sent to Lord Panmure when he enquired the cause of the delay in making this trial against Shrapnell shells, was *not* "that the battery was not ready," but, "*that the committee at Woolwich were not ready with their Shrapnell shells,*" when a reply of this nature after a delay of eight or ten months was considered satisfactory by Lord Panmure, and that no attention was paid to the orders given by his Lordship to have an officer and the required number of men drilled into the knowledge of the use of this weapon of war, and that it has been allowed to remain ever since under the "wet blanket." It is evident that the sooner the system thus patronized by that noble Lord is placed under the "wet blanket" the more advantageous will it be for the nation, and that threatened as we are with a European war

the sooner an enquiry is instituted into cases of this nature the better, as a better illustration of the circum-location system could not be given even by Dickens than that with which Captain Vivian amused the House of Commons on the 10th of March of the present year, in moving for a committee to remedy such an evil. This gallant officer said that "he did not ask for a committee in order to lay down rules for administering our military affairs hereafter but to inquire into the present condition of that administration in which there remained so many faults, that if we were again subjected to the pressure of a great war it was probable that some part of it would break down, few persons knew how many examinations and minutes a letter was subjected to before it reached the Secretary of State. Having been distributed by the general registry, the clerks in which had to deal on an average with 1200 letters each day, it was opened by the junior clerk, who made a minute of what he thought ought to be done, subsequently the head of the room and the head of the department each made a minute which often did not agree, and then it went to Mr. Godfrey who put on it, 'I agree,' afterwards to Sir B. Hawes, who might put 'I concur,' and then it reached the Secretary of State who wrote, 'I approve.' By that time, however, the document was often so covered with minutes, that it was difficult to tell of what the right honorable gentleman approved, and there had to be a reference on the subject. If reference had to be made to any other department, such as the Admiralty, there was still great delay and difficulty. In one case an officer ordered on foreign service who had applied to the Admiralty for a passage, after waiting some

time received a letter, dated the 24th of the month, ordering him to proceed by a ship which sailed on the 22nd.; in another instance, in which an officer had made a requisition to the War office that some oats should be sent to the Cape of Good Hope, there was so fierce a dispute among the clerks as to whether they should be sent in bags, tubs, or barrels, that the original requisition was lost sight of until a letter was received from the Cape some months afterwards asking why the oats had not been sent. He would not weary the House by multiplying such illustrations as these, but he contended that in the present uncertainty as to the maintenance of peace we ought to look into our military organization, and so arrange it that we might not again witness the spectacle of a magnificent army sacrificed to the defects of a system."

Amongst other instances of serious evils arising out of this circumlocution system of routine and divided responsibility, that of two regiments having been required with great dispatch from the Cape of Good Hope during the crisis of the Crimean campaign might have been noticed when the ships were sent off with orders from the War minister to the governor of the Cape for their embarkation, but as the troops were under the command of a General Officer who was under the command of Lord Hardinge, then Commander-in-chief, this noble Lord having neglected to send any order for the removal of these regiments, no attention was paid to the authority of the War Minister, or to that of the Colonial Governor, so the ships returned empty as they went.

When the fate not only of armies but of nations may be sealed by blunders of this unpardonable nature, the committee thus obtained by Captain Vivian should bear

in mind the observations of *Junius*—"That if facts, such as these, make no impression it is because they are too vulgar and notorious.—But when the indifference of the people continues too long they must be roused to a sense of their danger."

The danger to which this country is exposed since the introduction of steam being now much more imminent than at any former period of our history renders it the more necessary for our rulers to profit by all improvements in the art of war that would increase the destructive powers of our implements of war, so as to make amends as far as possible for the numerical inferiority of our armies compared with the armies of continental nations, as we can no longer repose in such safety on the wooden walls of England when it is recollected that however vigilant our fleets may be, 100,000 men, brought by railway and embarked after sunset of a dark night at different French ports, could be thrown on our shores before sunrise on the following morning unperceived by our fleets, or, as we were reminded by some of the French papers, after the great Cherbourg exhibition of last year, a Russian fleet could keep our vessels of war engaged while the fleets of France were conveying a force to our shores that could not be encountered with any hope of success by the comparatively small force that might happen to be stationed at the different points which might be selected by an enemy for disembarkation. For these reasons, instead of discouraging the few remaining veterans of the Peninsular war, when they have valuable suggestions to make, every encouragement should be given them.

With a formidable enemy at our doors, veteran officers as renowned for gallantry as for scientific acquirements

should not be driven in disgust from the service by the sale of their commissions, to make way for the aristocracy of rank and wealth under the baneful purchase system. The possession of such acquirements should no longer be made the standards of military merit, standards not recognised in the army of any other nation.

The case of Captain Norton may be instanced in illustration of this fact—this Officer, after having served for a quarter of a century, in all quarters of the globe, not being able to obtain advancement without money or influential connections, and finding his valuable suggestions for improvements in the art of war rejected at home, and adopted abroad by the armies of other nations, retired in disgust by the sale of his commission,—his services as Lieutenant of the 34th Regiment during the entire of the war in the Peninsula being of no avail, although he commanded the grenadier company of that regiment at the sanguinary battle of Albuera, which led the attack of Abercrombie's brigade, when co-operating with the 4th division in deciding the fate of that battle by retaking the hill, which was the key of our position, after it had been abandoned by the Spaniards. This Officer, though recommended on that and other occasions for promotion, was informed, (as other subalterns were during that war), that the rules of the service precluded them from the brevet promotion usually given for distinguished services to officers of higher grades, and that they should therefore wait until regimental vacancies occurred, but which did not occur in Captain Norton's case until after a lengthened period of service in India. Subsequent to the Peninsula war, his regiment returned to England, even then he was refused that



advancement by a brevet step which he would have obtained had he held the rank of Captain instead of that of Lieutenant, during those ever memorable campaigns in the Peninsula.

Other cases of this nature were also made public during the late Crimean war, as will appear by the following extract from a letter addressed by a distinguished general officer to *The Times* newspaper, in August 1854, with reference to an article in that paper on the injustice experienced by Lieut. Nasmyth, whose conduct was so distinguished at Silistria :—

## JUSTICE TO THE SUBALTERNs OF THE ARMY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

You observe, in one of the recent numbers of your valuable journal, that "Lieutenant Nasmyth, who distinguished himself at Silistria, has not been promoted to the rank of Major, his name being merely recorded for that rank by brevet after he shall have attained the regimental rank of captain in the ordinary course,—an event that may never happen ; so that, substantially, this officer has not received any promotion for his heroic conduct at that siege."

I am glad to find, Sir, that acts of injustice of this description are noticed by the press, as it is only by such means that the authorities at the Horse Guards will be compelled to extend those rewards to all ranks for meritorious services heretofore monopolized by privileged classes.

A variety of complaints of this nature were made during the late Peninsular war, where gallant officers, leading even "forlorn hopes," or succeeding to the command of a regiment in action, could not obtain promotion by brevet if they held no higher rank than that of lieutenant, however brilliant their services might have been ; while so many of the "privileged classes," though merely on the staff, and passive spectators (through their telescopes) of those sanguinary con-

flicts, obtained the brevet steps merited by the fighting men who decided the fate of that war.

Lieutenant Mackie, for instance, of the 88th Regiment (Connaught Rangers), who led the "forlorn hope" at Ciudad Rodrigo, noticed by Napier and others, carried the breach and made the governor a prisoner, but got no promotion until he obtained his company by seniority in that regiment, and even then it was unaccompanied by any brevet step. This gallant soldier retired from the service in disgust; and after the conclusion of the war died in despair, without even a bit of riband to decorate his breast.

Another instance, in the case of Sir John Scott Lillie, may be mentioned, who commanded a Portuguese regiment in several engagements during that war, as lieutenant in the British army and field officer in that of Portugal, but could obtain no brevet promotion, although the thanks of the Duke of Wellington on various occasions had been conveyed to him on the field for his distinguished services by a living witness and most gallant officer, the present Duke of Richmond, one of his Grace's aides-de-camp. At Salamanca, Lieutenant Lillie commanded a detachment, which was noticed in the Duke's dispatches as having commenced the fight on that glorious occasion, by contesting with the enemy the occupation of the hills called Aripiles. The manner in which this was done I find described by Napier as "similar to that which happened between Cæsar and Africanus at Lerida; for the French, seeing this detachment approach, broke their own ranks, and running without order to the encounter, gained the first Aripiles, and kept it, but were repulsed in an endeavor to seize the second."

In referring to the Duke's dispatches on the various fights in the Pyrenees, which continued for seven days in succession, I find that he speaks of the 7th Caçadores, on the 30th of July, as having "led the attack on the front of the enemy's main position, from which he was driven, notwithstanding its having been one of the strongest and most difficult of access that his Grace had ever seen occupied by troops." This regiment (the 7th Caçadores) was then commanded by Sir John Lillie, as a British lieutenant, to whom the Duke's thanks and approbation of his conduct were again conveyed, as formerly, by his aide-de-camp, the present Duke of Richmond; but, from his holding no higher rank than lieutenant, he could obtain no promotion, nor were the hopes held out to him (as in the case you allude to of Lieutenant Nasmyth) of getting

brevet rank on obtaining his company ever realized, notwithstanding his merits on four different occasions that he commanded his regiment, which entitled him to it. This assertion is proved by the fact of his having received the Gold Cross (*vide Army List*), with a silver medal and several clasps, making, with the Order of the Bath, 12 decorations for distinguished services as a regimental officer.

Among a variety of other instances I can state the case of Lieutenant Power, of the 47th British Regiment, upon whom devolved its command during the sanguinary conflict at the storming of San Sebastian, where this officer particularly distinguished himself, and for which he received a gold medal; but his rank of lieutenant precluded him from the more substantial reward of promotion, which to his mortification, he saw granted to all others of higher rank, though of inferior merit.

What are empty honours, Sir, after a lapse of 40 years, when compared with the regiments and the thousands a-year now enjoyed by so many staff and other officers who never even commanded a company in action in their lives?

Such acts of injustice, Sir, that are not sanctioned by any other Government in the world, should be put a stop to. Now is the time, when we are engaged in important scenes of war, with the hopes of civilized Europe concentrated on our efforts, in alliance with troops accustomed to receive honours and promotions on the field as rewards of merit, without waiting for such contingencies as you justly remark "may never occur"—now is the time, I repeat, Sir, to let the sparks of heroism which shall blaze forth during this war, whether from the ranks of subalterns, non-commissioned officers, or soldiers, receive their due meed of reward in promotion, and not suffer their fire to be extinguished by wet blankets from head-quarters, while false lights are discovered and frequently magnified into brilliant stars in more elevated grades.

You, Sir, and the press in general, have done good service to the army in the fire opened upon the cases of Lieutenant Perry, and Lieutenant Nasmyth, and I hope to see that fire kept up until the advocates of Horse Guards' monopolies, persecutions, and prosecutions of friendless subalterns shall be compelled to strike their flags.

FROM the case thus adverted to, as regards Lieut. Nasmyth, it would appear that what Napier (in his history of the Peninsular war) termed "the cold shade of the Aristocracy" bore as hard upon the Subalterns of the British army in the Russian war as in that of the Peninsula. When the enterprising spirit of young Officers is thus nipped in the bud, at an age when that *cold shade*, like a nipping frost, is felt with greater acuteness than at more advanced periods of life, it is not to be wondered at that many of them should have retired in disgust from a service in which the possession of wealth and aristocratic influence is still looked upon as the only standards of Military Merit, as all the officers of the Peninsular war adverted to in the foregoing letter did retire, not only from the service but from this life, with the exception of Sir J. S. Lillie.

This officer in addition to the decorations conferred for distinguished services as a subaltern, on twelve different occasions, had the detachments, for the command of which he was selected by the Duke himself, noticed in His Grace's dispatches as well as in Napier's history of that war in which the conflict for the possession of the Aripiles hills at Salamanca was represented "as similar to that between Cæsar and Africanus at Lerida." From a memoir detailing the services of Sir J. S. Lillie, which was published some years since, it appeared that when the Duke of Wellington sent the orders adverted to in this letter, by the present Duke of Richmond, to Sir J. S. Lillie, at Salamanca, to take possession of one of these hills shortly after day break, no enemy being then in sight, nor any intimation given to either of these officers as to any enemy being in the neighbourhood,

although as it afterwards appeared a division of the French army lay concealed in a wood about half a mile from the more distant of these hills. On this hill there were some straggling Spanish soldiers, which tended still more to lull suspicion. This detachment of Cassadores was also about half a mile distant on our side of the hill when this order had been given, and, on its arrival, the ascent being too steep for a mounted officer, Sir John rode round the base through the high standing corn until he encountered a detachment which he took from their uniform to be Spaniards retiring rapidly from the wood, as when questioning them in Spanish they replied in the same language that they were Spaniards, he accordingly rode along side of them until the heads of the two detachments met on the table-land at the top and commenced firing on each other. During this confusion the balls whistling so closely about himself afforded additional evidence that if they were Spaniards they were not allies. The struggle and close conflict described by Napier then followed, the Duke perceiving this, ordered the Fuzileer Brigade to advance in support of the Cassadores, but as the head of a French column arrived on the platform long before the Fusileers could have reached it, the Cassadores were forced to yield.

This statement is borne out by the following extract from the Duke's despatches giving an account of that battle:—"Shortly after day-light, detachments from both armies attempted to take possession of the more distant from our right of the two hills, called 'Aripiles.' The enemy however succeeded, their detachment being the strongest and having been concealed in the woods nearer to the hill than we were. By which success they

strengthened materially their own position and had in their power increased means of annoying ours."

The importance attached by the Duke to this hill is proved by the following extract from a letter addressed to Sir Thos. Gaham, on the day following the date of this dispatch:—"We had a race for the large Aripiles which was the more distant of the two detached heights, this race the French won, and they were too strong to be dislodged without a general action." Whatever importance the Duke might have attached to the loss of this hill it would appear from his own dispatches, that its retention by the enemy during the whole of the day was not only the cause of the battle but of their defeat, their object being to get a head of us on the Ciudad Rodrigo road, and thus cut off our communication with Portugal, an object which Marmont ought to have seen that he could not accomplish without considerable danger so long as he retained possession of this hill as a "*point d'appui*" for his right flank. In his endeavours to gain that road, he extended his line to such an extent as to weaken his centre, of which the Duke took advantage about two o'clock, when he fell upon this weak point and decided the fate of the day, leaving the enemy still in possession of this hill until their defeated columns were in full retreat and they were compelled to follow. In so doing they were charged by the 40th British and 7th Cassadores, when one of the standards now in Chelsea hospital was taken by Sir J. S. Lillie at the head of that battalion which thus appears to have been the first to encounter these troops on the morning of that eventful day, and the last to give them this parting salute.

The efficiency of Portuguese troops when pro-

perly organized and commanded; was still more conspicuous in the other case of the 30th of July of the following year, in the Pyrenees, (as alluded to in "*The Times*"). On the 25th of that month, while the Duke was besieging St. Sebastian, Marshal Soult made an unexpected movement for the relief of Pampluna, which we had left blockaded in our rear after the battle of Victoria, compelling the troops opposed to him to retire, until after three days' fighting a sufficient force had assembled to make a stand in front of that fortress on the 28th of that month. A most sanguinary conflict then took place which obliged this Marshal of France to abandon that object, and to make the best arrangement he could for returning whence he came. On this occasion he occupied a range of mountains so difficult of access as to render it imprudent for us to follow up our victory, both armies therefore remained passive spectators of each other on the 29th, all hostilities having ceased so far as to admit of some of the officers commanding at advanced posts entering into friendly intercourse and conversation, as was the case between the officers of a French regiment which occupied an intermediate hill between the ranges of mountain occupied by each army and the 7th Cassadores, which happened to be posted at the distance of only a few hundred yards, although separated by a deep ravine intersected by wood. The Cassadores were then reduced by the four days' previous fighting to one Field Officer, one British Captain (Derinzy), four Portuguese subalterns and less than 300 men, while this French Regiment was ascertained to be more than double that strength. The morning of the 30th was ushered in with the same apparent tranquility, until the Duke

finding from the summit of his range of mountains that the main body of the enemy was retiring, leaving these advanced posts to cover their movement as long as possible, again sent an order to the 7th Cassadores, situated immediately under him, to take that intermediate hill from this French regiment, which being concealed behind it, his Grace could not have been aware of its strength, otherwise he never would have anticipated that so small a number of Portuguese could have dislodged from such a position more than double the number of such formidable enemies as the French,—however, Sir John, considering all remonstrance unadvisable under such circumstances, resolved on putting the best face on it, and as there was only one sentry visible on the top of this intermediate hill, he assembled his battalion as quietly as he could without sound of bugle, and told them of the orders he received, that there was only a captain's picquet behind the hill, the occupation of which the Duke had confided to that corps—that as both armies would be spectators of the manner in which that duty would be performed, the soldiers of Portugal must not show themselves inferior to those of any other nation then on the field. The two flank companies were accordingly ordered to move quietly round at each side of the hill, and not to fire a shot until they reached the opposite side, while Sir John ascended in front with the remainder. The enemy thus surprised ran in confusion to the top of the hill, when the Duke perceiving for the first time their superiority of numbers, ordered out all the regiments in the neighbourhood to support this battalion, which would have been annihilated in a short space of time had not the enemy, apparently terrified by the number of men they



witnessed turning out at the opposite side of this ravine, and the firing from these two companies in their rear, as well as from the remaining companies then attacking their front, gave way (saving their assailants as if by miracle) leaving the summit covered with the killed and wounded on both sides.

The Duke then finding a large body of the enemy advancing to support their men, ordered the Prince of Orange, Lord Fitzroy Somerset and Lord March in succession, lest accidents should happen to any of them, to apprise Sir John of this reinforcement of the enemy being in motion--to thank him for the manner in which his battalion had behaved, and to beg if possible that he would retain his post until the reinforcements ordered out for his support should have arrived. This message from the Duke was delivered to Sir John by Lord March in presence of Captain Derinzy (both of whom are still living), and the reply to his Lordship was that these two British officers would remain on their ground dead or alive, and that they had no apprehension of being abandoned by their men. The ravine between this intermediate hill and the main position was, however, so intersected with wood as to cause considerable delay in the arrival of our reinforcements, whereas the enemy having no such obstacles were enabled to ascend and renew the fight before the others could arrive. The Cassadores in the meantime were placed kneeling behind the crest of the hill, so as not to be seen by the enemy until they arrived within a few yards of them, when every shot from our side told, and after three ineffectual efforts to force that point, the French moved round the hill to their right, so as to enable them by a flank

movement to be more successful, but instead of the Portuguese abandoning the hill they were ordered to make a corresponding movement round the opposite side of the hill to their right, followed by the French, who were then exposed to such a fire from our troops at the other side of the ravine, that they abandoned the hill a second time, followed by the Cassadores and the main body of our army up this range of mountains, which the Duke described in his dispatches "as the strongest and most difficult of access that he had ever seen occupied by troops," an attack (stated also in those dispatches) "as having been led by the 7th Cassadores."

One would have imagined under such circumstances that these two officers, who made this display at the head of Portuguese troops, and who were both Subalterns in the British army, would have shared in the usual promotion for distinguished services, for which they had both been recommended on that occasion, at all events Sir John as Commanding Officer, who had been so frequently recommended on previous occasions. The reply was nevertheless that the names of these officers were noted for promotion as opportunities should offer, but that the rules of the Service did not admit of promotion by brevet for officers of that grade. The manifest injustice of such rules must have been apparent, not only in this case, but in that of all the British Subalterns, who, in common with officers of higher grades, were induced to enter the Portuguese Service, in 1808 with Sir Robert Wilson, and in 1809 with Lord Beresford, under a promise of a step of British rank, a promise that had been fulfilled only as regarded those who, like Lord Hardinge, held the British rank of Captain, all of whom got the step of Major before

they even joined the Portuguese army, and the second step of Lieut.-Colonel in 1811, although many of them, like his Lordship, never commanded a Portuguese soldier during the whole war;—while no such reward was extended to subaltern officers until after the termination of that war, notwithstanding their constant services as regimental officers,—and consequent superiority of pretensions in having organized these soldiers in such a manner as to enable them to overcome superior numbers of French troops in close combat, like the Horatii and Curatii of old, as witnessed by both armies, who were passive spectators in the cases already alluded to. Additional instances of “Justice to Subalterns!”

The following extracts from letters (published in the before-mentioned memoir) addressd by the Duke of Richmond to Sir John Lillie, will corroborate the main points of the foregoing deeds of arms at Salamanca and the Pyrenees—and show the interest he took in Sir John’s case :—

“ My dear Sir John,

“ I shall be always happy to bear my testimony as to the brave and efficient manner in which you led the 7th Cassadores on the occasions you mention, as I perfectly well remember going to you with orders from the Duke of Wellington on both occasions, and under a very heavy fire on the 30th of July in the Pyrenees, and also having been sent afterwards by the Duke to express his satisfaction to you for the gallant manner in which you and the regiment behaved,” of which I have already reminded the Duke and will not fail to do so again.”

It appeared however that the circumlocution office

with its divided responsibility came into operation here, as the Duke of Wellington's reply was, that he never interfered with promotions for services with the Portuguese army, which rested with Lord Beresford.—His Lordship, on the other hand, on being applied to, said, that as Sir J. S. Lillie was one of Sir Robert Wilson's officers he could not admit him as having any claims for promotion in his list; although subsequent to the affairs already alluded to Sir John received the thanks of his Lordship, in the General Orders of the Portuguese army, for his conduct in storming the fort of Sara at the battle of the Nive, and in leading the attack of the 4th Division in storming the fortified heights of the enemy, at the battle of Toulouse, where he was so severely wounded as to have been rendered unable to return with his regiment to Portugal,—which caused the removal of his name, together with the names of all other British Officers thus disabled by wounds, from the list of those serving with the Portuguese army after the conclusion of the war. He was also, for the same reason, deprived of the half-pay granted by the Portuguese Government for such services, after Lord Beresford himself, with his list of Officers, had been removed from that service by the constitutional Government, in 1820. The cause assigned for his Lordship's removal being the arbitrary manner in which that Government considered him to have exercised the powers conferred upon him by the King of Portugal, who was then in the Brazils, and over whom his Lordship was accused of having exercised an undue influence in the exaction of these powers, whenever he went for that purpose to the Brazils, where he happened to be when this constitution was proclaimed,

in 1820. He was consequently, on his return to Lisbon, not allowed to land, at which he was so indignant as to have threatened the Portuguese nation with a declaration of war on the part of England. This, no doubt, he would have done had his influence been as great in England as it had previously been in Portugal. Fortunately, however, for the constitutional system of Government in Portugal as well as for England he found himself mistaken in this view of the case.

The King of Portugal having shortly afterwards returned to his European dominions, Sir John Lillie was advised to wait upon His Majesty with a view of obtaining his intervention with the British Government in behalf of his claims for services with the Portuguese army, as he was the first British officer who entered that Service in 1808, under Sir Robert Wilson, who commenced the organization of Portuguese troops by British officers, previous to the arrival of Marshal Beresford or any of his officers in the following year. This fact excited such a degree of jealousy on the part of Lord Beresford, (who was desirous of a monopoly of that honor), that Sir Robert and his Officers were induced to withdraw altogether from that service shortly after the Marshal's arrival, with the exception of Sir J. S. Lillie, who continued in it until the conclusion of the war. Another fact that operated against the admission of Sir John's claims, by Lord Beresford, at a later period, was that of Sir Robert Wilson having been invited by the constitutional government of Portugal to take command of the Portuguese army, when the French army, under the Duke D'Angouleme, in 1823, invaded Spain in order to put down the constitutional government then established

there. Sir Robert Wilson having been then removed from the British service did take a part in support, in the first instance, of the constitutional Government of Spain, at Cadiz and Corunna, where he was wounded in an engagement with the invading armies of France. Sir John Lillie's visit to Lisbon, about the same time, induced Lord Beresford to suppose, as a matter of course, although erroneously, that he was acting in conjunction with Sir Robert Wilson, he consequently opposed the recognition of the claims of Sir John, when submitted accompanied by the following letter to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, by the Portuguese Ambassador, in 1823—

“The undersigned has the honor to commit to the charge of Mr. Canning, a Memorial from Sir John Scott Lillie, late Lieut.-Colonel in the Portuguese Service, addressed to His Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief of His Britannic Majesty's forces.

“The distinguished Services rendered by Sir John Scott Lillie during the Peninsular war, the severe wounds which he received, and the impossibility which thence resulted of his continuing any longer in the service of His most faithful Majesty, have gained him the particular attention of that Monarch, who has been pleased to command the undersigned to recommend, in his royal name, to the gracious attention and benevolence of his august ally the King of Great Britain, as well as to the consideration and patronage of his Royal Highness the Commander-in-Chief, the just petition which the undersigned has the honor to present with a view to the intervention of Mr. Canning.

“The interest which His most faithful Majesty has

the goodness to take in the suit of Sir John Scott Lillie arises not only from the sentiments of his generous heart, but also from the justice to which, in his royal opinion, the petitioner is entitled, accordingly the undersigned having briefly stated the orders of his Sovereign, which he is executing, hopes that so particular a recommendation will meet with a reception worthy of the exalted personages by whom and to whom it is addressed.

(Signed). "C. D. DE MORAES SARMENTO."

*"Dated, London, May 1st. 1823."*

This communication was, as thus solicited, recommended by Mr. Canning to the favorable consideration of the Duke of York, who referred it for Lord Beresford's report as to the correctness of the facts therein stated, but his Lordship was still so indignant with the constitutional government of Portugal (which he was pleased to designate as a revolutionary government) that he absolutely refused to recognize any communication emanating from it or its constitutional Sovereign, although recognized by the British Government.

Thus matters rested until 1830, when the agitation for a Reform in Parliament, a change in this anomalous order of things, became so obvious as not to be longer submitted to. On that occasion one of the Whig Candidates for office, Mr. Hobhouse, subsequently a Cabinet Minister (now Lord Broughton), and then Chairman of Mr. Hume's Committee, requested Sir John Lillie, as a Magistrate for Middlesex, to propose the nomination of Mr. Hume as a Candidate for the representation of that county,—and

likewise resolutions at several county Meetings in favor of parliamentary reform and of the Reform administration which succeeded that of the Duke of Wellington, when the resolutions thus emanating from the Metropolitan county were responded to throughout the kingdom, and proved so eminently successful.

Lord Hill was then Commander-in-Chief, and war with France being then apprehended, Sir John Lillie desirous of employment in such an event laid his claims before his Lordship for the rank of which he had been so unjustly deprived by the refusal of Lord Beresford to admit the correctness of the facts stated in the Memorial forwarded by the King of Portugal, namely, that if he had not been disabled by the wounds he received at the head of his regiment at the battle of Toulouse his name would have been included in a list of British Officers promoted to the rank of Major in 1814, and of British Lt.-Colonel in 1817, for their services with the Portuguese army, none of whom had served so long with that army as himself, nor had any of them received so many honoring marks of distinction for their services in the field. Lord Hill, with his usual good nature and sense of justice, undertook to call on Lord Beresford for his report on these facts, and if true to grant the promotion solicited. The reference was accordingly made, and Lord Beresford's reply was that they were *very true*. Sir John, as a matter of course, looked upon his claims as at length admitted, but it unfortunately happened that Lord Hill was only the *locum tenens* of the *iron Duke* who was still virtually Commander-in-Chief, and who could not easily forget the resolutions proposed by Sir John at those Middlesex Meetings, which contributed so essentially to



drive him from office, he therefore positively refused to sanction the fulfilment of the promise thus made by Lord Hill, which placed his Lordship in such a false position as to occasion severe animadversions on his conduct by Mr. Hume in the House of Commons. His Lordship's high sense of honor then compelled him to admit in self-defence to Sir John the true state of the case. The ineffectual efforts made by subsequent Cabinet Ministers to induce his Grace to alter any decision *right or wrong* that he had come to, and the representations made as to the injustice of punishing an officer for the exercise of his civil rights in support of the government of his country because the measures of that government were not approved of by his Grace proving unavailing, Sir John solicited permission to retire from the service by the sale of his commission in the event of his Grace persisting in refusing either advancement or employment, which permission was granted. The retirement of this officer may be thus looked upon as the act of his Grace in refusing the alternative thus submitted, and not of the officer himself.

The Duke would not even attend to the intervention of Members of his own Cabinet and personal friends, as would appear from the following letter addressed by Lord Hardinge to Sir John, which was published in the Memoir already alluded to. The appointment of Queen's aide-de-camp with the rank of Colonel is conferred for distinguished services on the field. Sir John finding, in 1841, officers junior to himself, with inferior pretensions, receiving this honorary reward, submitted his claims—through Lord Hardinge, then Secretary at War, to Lord Fitzroy Somerset, then Military Secretary—for it. This letter removes all doubts as to the political opinions of Sir John having

been the real cause of the Duke's indisposition to recognize his claims :—

“ *Whitehall Gardens, Nov. 16th, 1841.*

“ My Dear Lillie,

“ I consider you a very good officer and a very *bad politician*, the latter is no affair of mine, and ought not to be detrimental to the advancement of your claims, as I am not aware that you ever used expressions which would render your promotion to the honor of Queen's aide-de-camp a matter of doubt. I think, considering your gallant services, you have been very unfortunate in your promotion. If an opportunity should offer, such as you contemplate, I will speak to Lord Fitzroy again, I did so yesterday, and be assured nothing is more agreeable to me than to be of use to my old brother officers in the Peninsular war, although as Secretary at War I have in reality no power in matters of promotion.

“ Yours ever very sincerely,

“ H. HARDINGE.”

This letter proves the opinion of Lord Hardinge as to the services of Sir John Lillie when they served together with the Portuguese army subsequent to the period when Lord Beresford assumed the command of that army in 1809 ; and the following letter, which will be found in the before-mentioned Memoir, shows the opinion of Sir R. Wilson of his services previous to that period, during the important interval that elapsed between the embarkation of the British at Corunna, in the month of January of that year, and the month of May when the second ex-

pedition to Portugal arrived under Sir Arthur Wellesley. The safety of Portugal may be attributed to the active operations of Sir Robert Wilson during this interval, and the manner in which he organized the Portuguese and Spanish troops for the defence of Lisbon and the eastern frontier of Portugal against two French Corps under Marshal Soult and General Lapisse.

This letter will also show the erroneous views entertained by Lord Beresford as to Sir John's having gone to Lisbon in 1823 for the purpose of co-operating with Sir Robert in support of the Constitutional Governments of Spain and Portugal, to which his Lordship, like all disciples of the old Tory School, were so much opposed, and so uncompromising in their hostility towards those whom they even suspected of being favorable to free constitutions. \*

To remove this impression from his Lordship's mind appears to have been the object of Sir John's addressing a letter to Sir Robert, to which the following was the reply :—

*“ Regent Street, 3rd of March, 1825.*

*“ My dear Sir John,*

*“ I do not know how I can assist you in the attainment of your most just claims ; but the very useful and gallant services you rendered when under my orders, and the notoriety of all your meritorious conduct, impose upon me an obligation to take any steps in favor of them which you may point out.*

*“ In your note I perceive you advert to a report of your having been sent by me to Portugal, in the year 1823, as a report prejudicial to your interest. If my*

\* Sir John did accept the rank of Major General and command of an expedition of 5000 men in 1832 for the restoration of the Queen to her throne then usurped by Don Miguel.

denial of the correctness of this report in the most authoritative manner can remove this obstacle to your pretensions you have a right to call upon me for it, for no report can be more groundless, as I never even heard of your going till you were on the eve of your departure, at which time I had been required by the Government of Portugal to accept, and had accepted, the command of its active army. I always bear in mind that you assisted me in the organization of the Lusitanian Legion previous to the general organization of Portuguese troops by British Officers under General Beresford's orders, and that when I was desired to throw the legion into some garrison towns, and to provide for my own and the British Officers' safety, Sir John Craddock feeling himself under the necessity of evacuating Lisbon when Marshal Soult should advance from Oporto, you concurred with me in the propriety of maintaining our position in Spain to oppose General Lapisse's division, on whose movements Marshal Soult depended for the resumption of his offensive operations, and you zealously and in a most exemplary manner resolved to share the fortunes of the Corps.

"When I recollect that in addition to those services you continued with the Portuguese army until the conclusion of the war, I cannot but consider you as possessing an irresistible title to all the advantages enjoyed by the other British officers who entered that service subsequent to yourself, and am confident the justice of His Majesty's Government will, on a statement of your claims, assure them to you. I have the sincerest desire to render you any aid in my power, and remain with great regard most faithfully yours,

"ROBERT WILSON."

Here we have the injustice of Lord Beresford's suspicions as to the supposed co-operation of Sir John Lillie with Sir Robert Wilson, in support of the constitutional Government of Portugal at that time, completely exposed, his Lordship, and not Sir John, ought therefore to be visited with the consequences of such unfounded suspicions, when his Lordship had been compelled by Lord Hill to admit the injustice thus experienced by this officer at his hands in 1830, but then the Duke of Wellington's veto was interposed upon grounds equally unjust, namely, the support given by Sir John in his civil capacity, as a Middlesex Magistrate, to the reform administration and government of that day.

The following extract from the report to Marshal Beresford, by General Vasconcellos, who commanded the Portuguese Brigade of the 4th Division at the battle of the Nive, will confirm the notice already taken of Sir John's conduct on that occasion :—

“I should be doing an injustice to Major Lillie, who commanded the 7th Cassadores, did I omit particularly mentioning him and that distinguished corps for their conduct in this battle, not only for their gallantry, but for the intelligence displayed by this officer and his personal bravery in storming the fort of Sara, he being the first to enter accompanied by Lieutenant Frederico Cæsar and very few men, by a gate at the rear, while the English attacked it in front, whereby a number of prisoners were made.”

This report was noticed by Marshal Beresford in the General Orders of the army in which the name of Sir John Lillie was specially mentioned, as appears by the

*London Gazette*, in which those General Orders were published.

At the battle of Toulouse, which terminated those campaigns, Sir John was again publicly thanked by Marshal Beresford, in the general orders of the Portuguese army, for his conduct in leading the attack of the 4th Division on the enemies' fortified heights: the Marshal's regret was expressed in the same public manner at the severe wounds received by Sir John on that occasion.

This case may be taken as a specimen of the merits and services of regimental officers, and of the manner in which such services are generally rewarded, compared with the services of Staff-Officers who are usually spectators, and of the manner in which the merits and services of such officers are generally recompensed.

The case of Lord Hardinge, for instance, may be taken as reported by an eulogium in *The Times* from Napier's History of the Peninsular war, on the occasion of his decease, which the following extract and correspondence which ensued will prove.

Lord Hardinge served on the Staff of the Quarter Master General's Department during the whole of the Peninsular campaigns, first with the British and then with the Portuguese army, and as the duties of Quarter Master, whether attached to an army, a division, or a regiment, are implied by the name—"looking out for quarters," it is evident that a Quarter Master, acting in any of these three departments, must be looked upon as a *non combatant*, and consequently more as a spectator than an actor on battle fields. Lord Hardinge's fame however for deeds of arms, by some unaccountable circumlocution, obtained for him great notoriety during

that war, more particularly for the attack he made on the enemies' main position at the battle of Albuera which decided the fate of the day, as thus described amongst various other actions of a minor nature in a leading article of *The Times* the day after his death :—

It was, however, at the battle of Albuera that Lord Hardinge performed the chief feat of his military career. That battle, as is well known, was offered to Soult by Beresford with more valour than discretion. During the progress of it Beresford, as ever, distinguished himself by the greatest personal courage; but the fortune of the day was turned by a happy manœuvre, executed by young Hardinge without orders, on his own responsibility. The battle was one of the most bloody on record in proportion to the number of the combatants. As General Napier writes :—“The rain flowed after in streams discoloured with blood, and 1500 unwounded men, the remnant of 6000 unconquerable British soldiers, stood triumphant on the fatal hill.” It is thus that the historian of the Peninsular war describes the attack made by Hardinge during that fearful day upon a French division posted upon an eminence formidable for defence :—

“Myers was killed; Cole himself, and Colonels Ellis, Blakeney, and Hawkshawe fell, badly wounded, and the whole brigade, ‘struck by the iron tempest, reeled and staggered like sinking ships.’ Suddenly recovering, however, they closed on their terrible enemy; and then was seen with what a strength and majesty the British soldier fights. In vain did Soult by voice and gesture animate his Frenchmen; in vain did the hardiest veterans, extricating themselves from the crowded column, sacrifice their lives to gain time and space for the mass to open out on such a fair field; in vain did the mass itself bear up, and, fiercely striving, fire indiscriminately on friends and foes, while the horsemen, hovering on the flanks, threatened to charge the advancing line. Nothing could stop that astonishing infantry. No sudden burst of undisciplined valour, no nervous enthusiasm weakened the stability of their order; their flashing eyes were bent on the dark columns in their front; their measured tread shook the ground; their dreadful volleys swept away the head of every formation; their deafening shouts overpowered the dissonant cries that broke from all parts of the tumultuous crowd, as foot by foot, and with a horrid carnage, it was driven

by the incessant vigour of the attack to the furthest edge of the hill. In vain did the French reserves, joining with the struggling multitude, endeavour to sustain the fight; their efforts only increased the irremediable confusion, and the mighty mass, at length giving way like a loosened cliff, went headlong down the ascent."

This article was replied to by the following letter from Sir John Lillie, when it appeared, for the first time to the eyes of the public, that Lord Hardinge held no command whatever at that memorable and sanguinary engagement:—

## LORD HARDINGE AT ALBUERA.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—Without meaning to detract from the merits and services of the late Lord Hardinge, as recorded by an article in your paper of this day, I think it but an act of justice towards the General who commanded the Fourth Division at the battle of Albuera, who is indirectly reflected upon by the merit of having gained that battle being given to Lord Hardinge, or, to use the words of the writer of that article, "that the fortune of the day was turned by a happy manœuvre executed by young Hardinge," to state that it is a well-known fact that this officer held no command whatever during that battle, and that it was Sir Lowry Cole who took upon himself the responsibility of executing the movement in question, in the absence of any orders from Marshal Beresford, who commanded the allied forces on that occasion, to whom Sir Lowry Cole sent an aide-de-camp for permission to make this movement; but, this aide-de-camp having been severely wounded and not having returned, Sir Lowry took the responsibility of making it upon himself, in the manner so brilliantly described in your quotation from *Napier's History*.

That young Hardinge was one of the staff officers who concurred in the expediency of such a movement there is no doubt, but to give him the exclusive merit of deciding the fate of the day would be a reflection upon the general of division (who, with all the commanding officers of the regiments engaged, was put *hors de combat*, while the staff officers were passive spectators)—a reflection which I feel per-



sueded the writer of that article would not willingly make. Having served, Sir, with Lord Hardinge in the Portuguese army during the whole of the Peninsular war, and having commanded a battalion in the Fourth Division during the latter part of that war, I cannot, with the greatest respect for Lord Hardinge's merits, submit in silence to see non-combatants get all the merit due to officers in command.

Lord Hardinge was Deputy-Quartermaster-General of the Portuguese army, and as it is well known that this army had no existence as an army in the field, owing to Portuguese brigades having been incorporated with British divisions, under the command of a British General of division, the commander-in-chief of the Portuguese army and his staff were, in point of fact, nonentities on the day of battle having no responsibility whatever attached to them, which was the cause of the Duke of Wellington having given Lord Beresford as frequently as possible a separate command. Even then there was no employment in action for officers of the Adjutant or Quartermaster-General's staff of the Portuguese army, every British division consisting of two British and one Portuguese brigade having had a staff exclusively British.

Having said thus much with regard to the facts of the case, I can only repeat that I most cordially concur in your eulogiums as to the merits of the late Lord Hardinge, which there are few now remaining who had more frequent opportunities of witnessing than

Your humble servant,

Sept. 25.

J. S. LILLIE.

Then follows another article from *The Times*, and subsequently another letter from Sir J. S. Lillie :—

We published yesterday a letter from Sir John Scott Lillie upon the subject of Lord Hardinge's share in the glorious victory of Albuera. In recapitulating, upon the previous day, the various services performed by Lord Hardinge in the course of his military career, we mentioned, upon the authority of Sir William Napier, "that the fortune of the day (at Albuera) was turned by a happy manœuvre executed by young Hardinge." The phrase given in inverted commas is our own. Our readers must judge for themselves how far it is borne out by the statement of Sir William

Napier. In the *History of the Peninsular War*, written by the gallant General, which has now taken its place among the classical works in the language, we find that Sir William writes as follows, after he had described the terrible straits to which the British force was driven when the French under Soult had succeeded in establishing themselves on the hill :—

“Destruction stared him (Beresford) in the face ; his personal resources were exhausted, and the unhappy thought of a retreat rose in his agitated mind. He had before brought Hamilton’s Portuguese into a situation to cover a retrograde movement ; he now sent orders to General Alten to abandon the bridge and village of Albuera, and to assemble with the Portuguese artillery in such a position as would cover a retreat by the Valverde road. But, while the Commander was thus preparing to resign the contest, *Colonel Hardinge, using his name, ordered General Cole to advance with the Fourth Division ; and then riding to the third brigade of the Second Division, which under the command of Colonel Abercrombie, had hitherto been only slightly engaged, directed him also to push forward into the fight.* The die was then cast and Beresford acquiesced. Alten received orders to retake the village, and the terrible battle was continued.”

The passage is to be found in the 3d volume of *Napier’s Peninsular War*, page 545, edition of 1840. Sir John Lillie’s counter-statement is as follows :—

“It was Sir Lowry Cole who took upon himself the responsibility of executing the movement in question, in the absence of any orders from Marshal Beresford, who commanded the allied forces on that occasion, to whom Sir Lowry Cole sent an aide-de-camp for permission to make this movement ; but, this aide-de-camp having been severely wounded and not having returned, Sir Lowry took the responsibility of making it upon himself, in the manner so brilliantly described in your quotation from *Napier’s History.*”

This is the state of the controversy, from which we now retire, for the question of fact is one which must be settled between Sir William Napier and Sir John Lillie. The readers of *The Times* will, however, we hope, exonerate us from the imputation of risking rash, unadvised statements, which may detract from the fame of the glorious dead. Sir William Napier is a man of far too chivalrous and generous a character to publish any statement which might affect the reputation

of a brother officer which he did not conscientiously believe to be correct. Sir John Lillie, again, was one of the most distinguished officers in the Peninsular War—a man whose name is illustrated by a bead-roll of the most splendid services. He would no more utter, unadvisedly, any remarks prejudicial to the memory of Lord Hardinge without overpowering necessity than Sir William Napier would seek to detract from the reputation of Sir Lowry Cole. Wherever the mistake may lie, it is not with us. We can but tell the tale as we received it from our forefathers, and certainly the general impression hitherto has been that the battle of Albuera was won by the daring, but unauthorized manœuvre of Colonel Hardinge.

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## THE ALBUERA CONTROVERSY.

“Palmarum qui meruit ferat.”

### TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,—In your paper of this day you refer to the credit given in your leading article of the 25th inst. to Lord Hardinge for having “by a happy manœuvre turned the fortune of the day at the battle of Albuera,” and to a letter from me claiming for Sir Lowry Cole the merit of having taken on himself the exclusive responsibility of the movement for which the credit has been thus given to Lord Hardinge; you then quote as your authority for this view of the case Sir W. Napier’s historical record of that affair, wherein it is stated “that Colonel Hardinge, using Beresford’s name, ordered General Cole to advance with the 4th Division,” whereby the fate of the day was decided.

This view of the case being at variance with that advanced by me, you then add,—

“This is the state of the controversy from which we now retire, for the question of fact is one that must be settled between Sir William Napier and Sir John Lillie.”

Thus called upon, Sir, I have no alternative but that of following your example by referring to my authority in support of my statement, as you have done in support of yours. This authority, Sir, is Colonel Wade, who, as one of Sir Lowry Cole’s aides-de-camp, was present at all that transpired on that occasion between Sir Lowry

Cole and Colonel Hardinge, and who addressed a letter on the 13th of June, 1840, to the editor of the *United Service Journal* with reference to the credit thus claimed, in which he stated:—

“That during the whole of that eventful day Sir Lowry Cole received no order whatever, either from Sir Henry Hardinge or from any other officer. That the whole of the merit and responsibility of the advance of the 4th Division belonged exclusively to Sir Lowry Cole. It is quite true (he adds) that the advance of the 4th Division was recommended, and very urgently so, by Lieutenant-Colonels Brooke and Hardinge, as well as by every Staff-officer attached to Sir Lowry Cole. The General, however, stood in no need of such suggestions, the state of the battle at the time they were offered having rendered it evident to him, as to all around him, that the troops under his command could not much longer remain inactive spectators of the contest. But then Sir Lowry had received the strictest injunction not to move his division from the very important position in which it had been posted without the express orders of Marshal Beresford, and to obtain these he had despatched an aide-de-camp (the late Major De Roveria). Poor De Roveria was, however, as it afterwards appeared, severely wounded while proceeding in search of the Marshal, and never reached him, and Sir Lowry was with the greatest anxiety looking for his return when that crisis arrived when not only the expected authority could no longer be waited for, but when the General commanding the 4th Division could no longer hesitate to take on himself the responsibility of acting on his own judgment; Sir Lowry accordingly decided on the advance of his division and led the Fusileer Brigade to that attack so eloquently described by Napier, and which he truly asserts gained the day.

“J. Wade, Colonel and Aide-de-camp  
to Sir Lowry Cole.”

Trusting, Sir, that this evidence of Colonel Wade will be considered as conclusive in support of the statements in my letter to you of the 25th inst.,

I have the honour to remain,

Your very obedient servant,

J. S. LILLIE.

Sept. 27.

This letter from Colonel Wade was one of a series of communications published in the *United Service Journal* when Sir Lowry Cole and Lord Beresford discovered this passage in *Napier's History*, and protested against its correctness. Napier not having been present at Albuera defended himself by stating that all the information he obtained as to the part taken in that battle by Hardinge was from Hardinge himself, who in self-defence alleged that Napier must have misunderstood him, which left the "Historian" no alternative but that of admitting that the error in that case must have been his own. The foregoing facts must however speak for themselves as to where the probability of the error did lie.

If "the fortune of the day at Albuera was turned (as represented in *The Times*) by a happy manœuvre executed by young Hardinge without orders and on his own responsibility," there can be no doubt that this happy manœuvre has the effect of sending his name down to posterity as the victor of Albuera. The statement to this effect in *Napier's History* having been copied by Allisson and other historians.

In thus adverting to the manner in which Staff-officers occasionally obtain advancement and military fame, it may be added that in quarters they have advantages not possessed by regimental officers, in not requiring to be troubled with providing themselves with a table, as they enjoy free quarters at that of the general officer to whom they are attached, Staff-officers are thereby more likely on occasions of promotion to come under notice, than regimental officers who ("out of sight out of mind") have their merits frequently overlooked. At this battle of Albuera, for instance, the name of Colonel Hawkshawe

was noticed by Napier as one of the commanding officers who fell badly wounded at the head of the 1st Battalion of the Lusitanian Legion, organised by Sir Robert Wilson (which afterwards became the 7th Cassadores). This officer having then held only the rank of Major in the British army, and of the same standing as Sir Henry Hardinge, one would have imagined that he would have had at least the same pretensions to the British rank of Lieut.-Colonel, his name was nevertheless omitted from the list of promotions granted for that battle, while that of Hardinge was included in that list. Hawkshaw returned to England and retired in disgust from the service, like so many others, by the sale of his commission, to make room for one of those scions of nobility, whose family influence and the possession of wealth constituted their chief standard of military merit. It would be difficult to suppose, as in the case of Sir John Lillie already adverted to, that Colonel Hawkshaw having been one of those officers who served in the Lusitanian Legion, organised by Sir Robert Wilson previous to its formation into Cassador Battalions, could have operated on the mind of Marshal Beresford when he excluded his name from the list of promotions granted for the battle of Albuera, in which this gallant officer Hawkshaw so pre-eminently distinguished himself—the fact must nevertheless speak for itself.

The case of the late Sir Charles Napier (who was looked upon by the Duke of Wellington as the only officer fit to be Commander-in-chief in India, when he was selected for that command on a former important crisis of our affairs there) may be taken as another instance of the injustice experienced by regimental

officers compared with those serving on the Staff. This officer commanded the 50th Regiment at the battle of Corunna, as a Major of some years' standing, even then the Commander of the forces there, Sir John Moore, entertained a high opinion of his military merit, as he placed his regiment in a prominent point, when Marshal Soult made a formidable attack on our position there, and when Sir John perceived the determined manner in which the 50th resisted that attack under Majors Napier and Stanhope until the enemy actually got amongst them, the last words he expressed before he received his mortal wound were "well done, my Majors." Stanhope was killed and Napier taken prisoner, so covered with wounds as to have been reported amongst the slain, and his family in mourning for his loss, when accounts were received from Marshal Soult of his being still alive, and of the Marshal having respected his bravery so much and so much regretted the severity of his wounds as to induce him to send him back to England in preference to exposing him to the fatigue of a journey to France with the other prisoners captured on that occasion. Captain Hardinge having served also at Corunna as Deputy-assistant Quarter Master General, and consequently *a spectator* of these exploits, one would have imagined, if a question was raised as to which of these two officers had the strongest claims for the rank of Lieut.-Colonel, little doubt would have existed as to the preference being given to Napier, but such are the anomalies of our military system that Hardinge, who never commanded a soldier or served as a Regimental officer in action, obtained this rank of Lieut.-Colonel before Napier!

As instances of acts of injustice of this nature would

be interminable, and far exceed the intentions of the writer of this Memoir, when his object was merely to advert to certain improvements in the art of war, but as the prospects of war on our own shores have been recently increased, he considered it of national importance to enter into some details as to the evils of our military system. The exposure of evils being a preparatory step to the adoption of measures for their amendment, when we are exposed to dangers that call for the most strenuous exertions on the part of our rulers for placing our Naval and Military resources on the most efficient footing, and opening the door for promotion to *all grades*.

Great as may be the evils of our military system, it is to be apprehended that they are not greater than those of our Naval. For although the possession of wealth for promotion by purchase is not regarded as a standard of Naval merit; the cold shade of the aristocracy presses so severely also upon merit in our Naval department, as to render some notice of the manner in which the rules of the service preclude all hopes of advancement even to the rank of Captain from those who, whatever may be their merits or qualification, have not sufficient family influence or aristocratic connections to enter the service as Midshipmen, by means of such connections the only door which leads to such advancement.

Amongst a variety of instances in corroboration of this fact in the annals of our naval history, some of which led to the celebrated Mutiny at the Nore during our last war with France, the case of Robert Wilson Roberts, a Master and Commander in the Navy, is one deserving of special notice, as although he did more to save the Crimean expedition from ruin and disgrace than any other



individual in our Naval or Military service, during the late war with Russia, the rules of the service, framed under the cold shade of that aristocracy, precluded him from all hopes of obtaining any reward for such eminent services, until death terminated his sufferings, as will be seen by the following observations of Sir George Cayley, accompanied by official documents, which appeared in the columns of the *Daily News* on the 11th and 25th of March last, (1859):—.

## OFFICIAL JUSTICE AND MERCY AT THE ADMIRALTY.

### TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY NEWS.

SIR—Permit me to call your attention to a case of more than ordinary official injustice and cruelty towards merit of a very high order. I became acquainted with the outlines of the circumstances in the Crimea during the war. These have been filled up, and more than substantiated by original documents which have been placed in my hands since the recent death of the victim—a well-deserving, ill-requited man, who wrecked his life in his country's cause, and died under the slow torture of official tyranny and the deadly sickness of hope deferred.

I have drawn up a Memoir of the service and its reward in the hope of doing justice at least to the memory of this neglected hero, who from professional delicacy would never allow his grievances to be made public in his life-time. It will explain itself, if room for it can be found in your columns, which are never closed to any well-grounded appeal against oppression.

We all have read how Gulliver, in his voyage to Laputa, has an interview with that ill-used captain who broke the enemy's line and won the battle of Actium—who "on some little confidence of merit," solicited preferment at the court of Augustus; and was removed from his command to make way for a favourite page of Publicola. "I was so curious," says Gulliver, "to learn the truth of this story that I desired Agrippa might be called who was admiral in that fight. He appeared, and confirmed the whole account, but with much more advantage to the captain, whose modesty had extenuated and concealed a great part of his merit."

R. W. Roberts, Master, R.N., commanding her Majesty's war steamer, Cyclops, is the ill-used man. He saves the Crimean expedition from fatal unreadiness and disgrace in the eleventh hour; and is accordingly snubbed by Sir Charles Wood's private secretary, with the remark that "of course every one thinks well of his own services." Lord Lyons is Agrippa; and I must be content to figure as Gulliver.

I am, &c.,

GEORGE JOHN CAYLEY.

Every one can prophecy after the event. What mainly distinguishes able from incapable men is their faculty of foreseeing and preparing for great events under the pressure of responsibility. We all remember during the preliminaries of the Crimean war what uncertainty and vacillation prevailed in councils at home and abroad. The spirit of indignation aroused in England by the lamentable revelations of the correspondents of the press about Midsummer, 1854, stimulated the Government to perceive a necessity for some prompt and decisive move. Orders were accordingly sent out to make an immediate descent on the Crimea. It might have seemed self-evident to those in command that large bodies of troops had been gathered in the Black Sea with a view to some such end; but on the arrival of these instructions it was suddenly discovered that no preparations had been made, such as would enable them to land troops rapidly in the face of an opposing force. The season was already advanced. The shipwrights at Constantinople estimated the time necessary to construct an adequate number of flat-bottomed boats of proper dimensions for troops, cavalry, and artillery, at not less than three months; they announced, moreover, that materials were not to be found in the market at Constantinople. Here was a dilemma. Either the expedition must be delayed till the winter set in, or postponed till the next season, at an incalculable loss of those brave troops who were "eating their hearts in idleness till they sickened and died in the wretched swamps of Varna."

"Dead locks" of this kind are the occasions which bring out great men, if such are to be found. Amid the general perplexity and confusion, one man was neither disheartened nor at a loss. He had foreseen the emergency and prepared to meet it. It became known to the heads of the expedition that Mr. Robert Wilson Roberts, a master in the navy, commanding her Majesty's war steamer Cylops, considered

to be a man of most practical seaman-like ability, was not of the general opinion that the expedition must be put off. He was prepared with a scheme by which their exigency could be supplied, without further delay than was necessary to complete other general equipments of the expedition. Was he aware, said they, that he proposed to accomplish in seven days what official incompetency estimated at three months, even were the materials procurable without extra delay? Mr. Roberts replied, that he had placed himself in a position to lay his hand on materials of which much less would be wanted than was estimated by the shipwrights; there was assuredly neither wood nor time enough to make regular broad bottomed flats. The feasibility of his scheme consisted in adopting a sufficient floatage of the long narrow caiques of the country (which could be bought ready made in any number), while breadth of beam and stability in the water was to be obtained by staging these boats together with platforms of adequate width. Such rafts would be equally safe and capacious, and more rapidly manageable than flats, while such adaptation would require so much less materials and labour as might reduce the undertaking within the limits of possibility, at the same time vastly reducing the cost of the job itself, independent of the ruinous loss to the army which might result from delay. But, objected the great personage in authority, how do you know such rafts as you describe can be constructed? I have satisfied myself on that point, replied Mr. Roberts, by recently constructing one. But how will you obtain materials? Foreseeing this emergency I have already secured sufficient deals of proper length and thickness to carry out my plan.\* If you will give me proper force of hands, money, and authority, I will have all ready in a week. "If you do it" (said Sir George Brown) "you deserve the thanks of the whole army." He did it. He performed by a superhuman strain of energy what every one thought madness to attempt. He did it by working night and day, with head and hands, heart and soul in the effort—here and there and every where, with his shirt-sleeves up to his shoulders, marking timber, sawing plank, driving bolts—with a motley crew of ships' carpenters, common soldiers, Turks, Greeks, and Armenians—stimulating this man by praise, that man by bribes, the

\* This was done at his own personal risk and expense by bribes and earnest money, after urging it upon Admiral Boxer, who, however, could not move in the absence of instructions.

other by threats, and the whole by his example. He had declared war with impossibility; and how he wrestled with his incubus enemy—drenched in sweat and choked in dust under a broiling sun in the arsenal on the Golden Horn—made the men who saw him marvel. Lord Lyons had come down from Varna to see what progress he would make. At first the Admiral looked on, as Ulysses might have looked on the toil of Sisyphus. It was wonderful energy hopelessly employed. He shook his head and said, "You have undertaken too much, you will deceive both yourself and us! Here is the third day and you have not finished one pontoon, and still you talk of completing the whole in seven days." Mr. Roberts replied, "if I attempted to finish one at a time I should certainly fail. I am getting the several parts ready for the whole, and that done, I shall put them together all at once." On the fifth day, Admiral Lyons said "Well, Roberts, I am quite satisfied now. I see you know what you are about, and will get through it; there is no use in my waiting any longer. I'll now join the Admiral; when you've finished you can bring out a couple in tow of your own ship, with the rest, to Varna."

Within the time promised the last nail was struck, and the job was done; but it was a deadly struggle, several of the workmen died of it, and Mr. Roberts, when the strain of anxiety relaxed, was carried on board his ship insensible, and remained so for some hours. His iron constitution had received a wrench which it never after recovered. The immediate effects of this seizure, however, had passed off during his passage to Varna, and he again renewed his exertions, working from three in the morning till nine at night, fitting boats and organizing the embarkation as master-attendant of steam-tugs and pontoons. In this capacity he also superintended the landing in the Crimea. On both these occasions the pontoons did their work to perfection. In the sea attack on Sebastopol, on the 17th October 1854, he towed her Majesty's ship, *Bellerophon*, into the thickest of the action. The *Cyclops* was the only vessel towing that fought her own guns; she and her consort, the *Bellerophon*, were the nearest ships in and the last out of the action, latterly getting the whole fire of the forts. "Too much praise cannot be given to you for your management of the *Cyclops* in this attack," says Admiral Lyons, in a communication to Mr. Roberts. Mr. Roberts had been more than any one instrumental in getting the expedition there at all that season; indeed, Lord Lyons was heard to declare, "Without Roberts' pontoons we could not have gone to the Crimea

at all that season." When, however, the promotions for this first naval engagement came out, all lieutenants in command received commanders' commissions, all commanders of steamers were made post captains and C.B's. If any man ever deserved a double step and a handsome grant of money into the bargain it was Roberts; and such doubtless was the opinion entertained by Lord Lyons, and transmitted by him to the Admiralty, if we may form a judgment from his writings to Mr. Roberts. But as in the cases of the Subalterns already alluded to, the doors were closed to all whose claims were unaccompanied by rank and patronage:—

*Sir E. Lyons to Mr. Roberts.—(Extract).*

"3rd Feb., 1856.

"Your untiring zeal and resources of your mind came most opportunely into play when it seemed almost impossible to find the means of disembarking the army in the Crimea, and I really do not know *what we could have done without you.*"

He got no step at all, for he was a master, and the Admiralty had an old standing aristocratic prejudice against promoting masters, although by an order in Council of 19th May, 1846, this branch of the profession had been encouraged with the assurance that "in the event of any particularly distinguished conduct which, in the opinion of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, it may be proper to reward by such advancement, masters of two years' service will be promoted to the rank of commander without the ordinary intermediate two years' as lieutenant." But perhaps the Admiralty Board was not of opinion that Mr. Roberts' conduct was so "particularly distinguished." Still Lord Raglan said to Admiral Lyons, "How is it, among all the promotions that have come out, there is no mention of Roberts, *who really did more for us than anybody?*" But were the Admiralty aware of this opinion of Lord Raglan? Admiral Lyons writes to Capt. Dacras—"I am distressed not to see Robert's name in the late list of Black Sea promotions. Lord Raglan, Sir George Brown, and I wrote as strongly as possible in his favour, and I will do so again this very post." We may arrive at the opinion Sir George Brown expressed to the proper authorities from the following extract from a letter written by him to Mr. Roberts:

*The second in command of the army, General Sir G. Brown to Mr. Roberts.—( Extract ).*

*August 27, 1857.*

"I cannot easily say how much we were indebted to your zeal, intelligence, and resource in preparing the means for disembarking the troops in the Crimea, at Constantinople, in the early part of August, 1854, when the expedition to the Crimea was finally determined on, and it was found that no adequate means had been provided for landing horses and artillery beyond the ordinary boats of the ships of war."

The cruel revulsion from high hopes justly entertained, together with the strain of exertion and racking harass of the service he had undergone, now began to tell seriously on Mr. Roberts's health but not until the wear and tear of strenuous and constant activity had so crippled the Cyclops that she had to be sent back to Malta for urgent repairs. Indeed, had it not been for his practical knowledge of steam and resolution to hold out to the last, she would have been disabled months earlier.

In passing Constantinople, Admiral Boxer, who knew his value, wished to detain him there as Master Attendant. He arrived at Malta, January 4, 1855, and writes to his wife—

*"Malta, Jan. 7, 1855.*

"I arrived here, after breaking down twice on my passage, three days ago, and have been kept pretty well employed towing in Neptune, Britannia and some transports with reinforcements. Our defects will be taken in hand in a few days, and in about six weeks I hope to be off Sebastopol again. My health is better since the change to Malta. I was completely knocked up from over fatigue. I wrote to Sir E. Lyons on the 7th December, telling him in very plain terms that I felt myself an illused man, and asked him point blank to get me made a Commander. They talk of not being able to repair the Cyclops here; if she is sent to England I shall volunteer to go up to Sebastopol."

(Copy.)

*"Ceylon (at Malta), Jan. 13, 1855.*

"Memo.—In consequence of the illness of Mr. Saunders, the master-attendant of this yard, you are hereby required to take upon yourself that officer's duties, afloat and ashore, until further orders; and which I feel persuaded, from your zeal for the service, will be

well and effectively executed, not omitting to pay due attention to the progress of the repairs on board your own ship.

(Signed)

“Hounston Stewart, Rear-Admiral.

“To R. W. Roberts, Esq., Commanding her  
Majesty’s steam-vessel Cyclops.”

(*Letter to his Wife.*)

“Jan. 21, 1855.

“My work as master-attendant, and captain of my own ship as well, gives me almost more work than I can attend to; particularly as I am under the doctor’s hands; but I don’t want to give in just yet, although I feel I must do so soon. Give my love to——. I would write, but I am so worn out, that I have only at times an occasional hour, when my cough prevents me sleeping, to employ in writing.

“*Malta Hospital, March 9, 1855.*

“I have been very ill, but thank God am now better. A severe cold caught in the Black Sea, together with being overworked and dispirited at not receiving something for my services, completely knocked me up. I worked hard and looked forward to receiving a reward long ere this, but whenever it may come now, I shall not feel the pleasure I should have felt in receiving it at the time.”

“*Malta Hospital, May 30, 1855.*

“I cannot write much, leaning position is so painful. My disease, which was not understood at first, turns out to be dropsy on the chest. I hope soon for news from England about my promotion.”

What was this news he was expecting? An official announcement of his promotion. Two months before his name had been mentioned with honour in the House of Commons, and a question asked as to whether he had received promotion for his distinguished services. Admiral Berkeley, First Naval Lord, had replied: “With regard to the case of Mr. Roberts, of the Cyclops, he was happy to say that that gentleman had been promoted, and had received from the right hon. baronet the member for Carlisle, for his merit, and merit only, one of the best situations a master was capable of holding.”\* (Hear, hear).

\* See *Times*, March 24, 1855.

This sorry evasion, which drew the cheers of the House of Commons on a rare instance of Admiralty promotion for merit, and merit only, was only true in so far as Mr. Roberts had been promoted to the rank of master eight years before ; and had received from Sir James Graham on the 20th of December, 1853, for his merit, and merit only, that appointment to the Cyclops which had enabled him to do those services whose reward was now the question before the house. That this statement of Admiral Berkeley's was so skilfully worded as to convey a directly false impression both to the parliamentary and naval mind, is sufficiently evidenced by the cheers of the House of Commons and the cordial congratulations of the Admiral and his brother officers at Malta on this public announcement of Mr. Roberts's promotion.

Two months pass, and still he receives no official announcement. There surely must be some mistake or omission. Alas! there is. Admiral Berkeley has been misinformed, and the Admiralty have omitted to promote him at all. He hears the lamentable news at last. He is invalided home and arrives at Haslar Hospital (June 30, 1855) in a dying state. His wife, on receiving intelligence through friends who accidentally hear of his return, for he is too ill to write, hurries back from Frankfort.

Mrs. Roberts's Journal.—“ July 9.—He knew me, but was constantly wandering. His sufferings appear very great. July 10. A little better ; often delirious. Would show me the Admiralty's answer to his memorial. His brain wanders on the subject of promotion ; it is painful to listen to him. His sufferings appear still to be very great. July 11 and 12.—Still wandering. July 13.—Dr. Lindsey says Robert is better, but his heart is diseased, and he will never again enjoy more than tolerable health. Continually dictating letters about his promotion. July 15 to August 1.—Sometimes better, sometimes worse. Often delirious, and, when so, always dwelling on the treatment he has received for his services.”

In November, 1855, he left Haslar a confirmed invalid. The doctor attending him affirmed that anxiety of mind retarded even the partial recovery he might hope for ; that the best prescription would be a Commander's commission and perfect rest and tranquility of mind for at least a year. While in the hospital Sir Charles Wood had come down on a tour of inspection. Mr. Roberts had greatly built upon the hope of seeing him and convincing him by his own eyes of the hopeless



state to which his services had reduced him. In this he was disappointed. But encouraged by a letter from Sir George Brown stating that "he had lately written, in reply to an inquiry of Sir Charles Wood of Mr. Roberts's services, in the most favourable terms in which he could express himself, and had been looking for his promotion ever since. —Hearing, moreover, from those who had opportunities of knowing, that Sir Charles Wood was less opposed to his advancement than Admiral Berkeley (from whom the main obstacle arose), he ventured to address Sir Charles Wood on the subject of promotion. He knew that Sir Charles Wood had been reminded of his services and his sufferings that very day, by Captain Dacres, who had seen the "struggle of the pontoons," and Dr. Nisbett, who was attending him in his present illness. All these circumstances raised his spirits with the hope that attention had at last been so fully drawn to his case that his promotion could be no longer withheld. The answer he received in holograph from Sir Chas. Wood, as the representative of England's spirit of acknowledgement and reward in the naval departments of heroism, deserves perusal:—

(Copy.)

"Portsmouth, Sept. 21, 1855.

"Sir,

I have had the honour of receiving your letter, and I am sorry to hear from yourself, as, indeed, I had heard from Dr. Nisbett, to whom I spoke on the subject, that you are at present unable to take any active employment. After the fullest consideration I can give on the subject, which indeed it had before received from the Board of Admiralty, I cannot comply with your request for promotion to the list of active commanders. But I need not repeat what has been said to you before that the board will be very glad to avail themselves of any fitting opportunity of marking the sense they entertain of your services.

I have the honour to be, sir, your obedient servant,

"Chas. Wood.

"R. W. Roberts, Esq."

Let the reader remark the official prescience—(he knew all about him already)—the playful, yet business-like antithesis by which it is pointed out to the meritorious but unreasonable invalid, that being broken down in his country's service he convicts himself of being unfit for promotion. That, in point of fact, what he is simple enough to put

forward as his claim implies a direct self-refutation. How brisk and parliamentary is the turn of thought and phrase! How consolatory to a naval hero dying slowly from the effects of overstrained exertion in his country's cause, suffering from dropsy on the chest, disease of the heart, and, worse than all, the deadly sickness of hope deferred, to receive such a kind and ample acknowledgement from the First Lord of the Admiralty.

Meantime his friends were not inactive. A member had announced a motion in the House of Commons for documents at the Admiralty, from the heads of the Crimean expedition relative to Mr. Roberts's services, and something fit or unfit must be thrust upon this troublesomely deserving man to silence him for a time, if not for ever. All about his unfitness for active employment was ignored by the official mind at once. He was appointed in succession to two arduous situations as master-attendant of Haulbowline, and Plymouth Victualling-yard.\* His friends urged him in vain not to be accessary to his own death by an over-exertion manifestly suicidal. Through a succession of attacks more and more serious and malignant he persisted to his last gasp in that strenuous performance of duty which had now for so long been only disastrous to his career. When he could no longer walk he was wheeled about in a chair, always attended by his wife or brother, in momentary anticipation of his sudden death. At length, feeling that his end was near, and that it was too late to think any more of his own chances, he resolved to make one more effort to recover at least something out of the wreck of his life for the benefit of his widow. The reply of the Admiralty reached him on his death-bed. It ran as follows :—

“ Admiralty, Oct. 1, 1857.

“ If you have suffered pecuniary loss from any steps taken in carrying out the public service, you should send in the requisite documents in support of any such claim.”

Not a word about the loss of health, and the substance of life

\* Good in a pecuniary point of view; but fatally laborious to an invalid. He had no choice, having nothing but his pay to live by. He hoped, even if the hard work killed him, to be able to insure something on his life as a provision for his widow. The companies, however, would have nothing to do with so shattered a constitution. Besides these appointments were not promotion.

expended, but if he could precisely prove a disbursement of any small change in shillings and pounds, that should be attended to.

Dec. 10, 1857. A few hours before his death he dictated these last dying words to the Admiralty:—

“Had I waited to procure documents, the pontoons would never have been completed in time, and the French (who took several weeks to perform what I accomplished in seven days) would have been prepared to land in the Crimea without us. As I saw no preparation had been made to land the army in the Crimea, I was certain of my pontoons being required, and on my own responsibility secured, by liberal fees, a quantity of wood to enable me to effect the service when called upon. During the progress of the work my hand was continually in my pocket for the same purpose, in addition to payment for tools and a variety of expenses in procuring what was necessary through Interpreters and others. I certainly never doubted that I should be liberally rewarded for what I did, in addition to being refunded my expenses. Sir E. Lyons always impressed upon me to spare no expense to accomplish the service in time. Carrying out the plans, I devised myself, was alone a saving of some thousands of pounds to the country, and I did not think of procuring documents, as I supposed that I should have been rewarded on the spot by the rank of Commander, in accordance with the order in council of 1846, and that I should have received promotion (the same as others in command) for the action of the 17th October, 1854.”

Mrs. Roberts shortly after her husband's death forwarded this statement (making no application of her own) to the Admiralty, accompanied by a formal declaration that these were his dying words. She received the subjoined:—

“Admiralty, Jan. 13, 1858.

“Madam—Having laid before my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty your letter of the 27th ultimo, relative to expenses incurred by your late husband, Mr. Robert Roberts, Master, R.N., in fitting pontoons, devised by him for embarking the troops at Varna, I am commanded by their lordships to acquaint you that they must adhere to their former decision of 1st October last, and cannot grant you any remuneration.

“I am, Madam, your humble servant,

“W. G. Romain.

“To Mrs. Roberts.”

Mrs. Roberts has not received anything beyond the ordinary pension of a master's widow, *viz.* 50*l.* per annum.

So ends this cruel case. No words of sorrow or of anger need be added to awaken the regret and indignation of England that her requital of such noble and strenuous devotion should have been thus cankered and distorted by the blight of cold blooded official pedantry and exclusiveness. The remains of this humble and neglected hero lie in the naval burial ground of Plymouth; the grave is covered by three rude stones from the walls of Sebastopol; above them stands a simple cross, graven only with the name, and age, and date—Robert Wilson Roberts, R.N., Ob. 10th December, 1857. *Ætat* 38. No blazonry of arms, no trophies of the victories he wrecked his life to win, no pompous marble setting forth his deeds. The only device is that of the compasses and square—emblems of that rectitude of principle, that completeness in the round of duty truly centred in his faith, which distinguished the life of this thorough Englishman and Christian. Those who knew him doubt not that "Death, the impartial judge between the high and low," has signed his commission to high promotion in the Great Kingdom where justice and mercy are administered without the intervention of official patronage.

The following appeared in the *Daily News*, Thursday, March 25, 1858 :—

In the seamen's burial ground of Plymouth are three rude stones from the walls of Sebastopol. Above them rises a simple cross, with this inscription :—" Robert Wilson Roberts, R.N., ob. 10th December 1857. *Ætat* 38." These few words, and the device of compasses and a square, are all the public records of that man's history. And yet he has a history—well authenticated and worthy to be remembered.

It was the autumn of 1854. Peremptory orders had arrived from England to make a descent on the Crimean coast. If the descent was to be made the troops would have to be landed, and that rapidly, in the face of the enemy. The thing at first sight seemed impossible. The shipwrights at Constantinople considered three months to be the very shortest time within which the flat-bottomed boats necessary for landing the English force could be constructed. What was to be done? Was the enterprise to be delayed for months or altogether abandoned,

whilst our men lay "eating their hearts in idleness, till they sickened and died in the swamps of Varna?" Amongst the admirals and generals all was perplexity. But there was one man who had foreseen the problem and had already solved it. That man was one Robert Wilson Roberts, a master in the Navy, then of her Majesty's steamer Cyclops. Rumours of his existence soon reached the commanders. They sent for him, and he at once told them that if he might have his own way the requisite number of flat-bottomed landing boats should be ready as soon as the other general equipments were completed. The idea seemed preposterous enough—without materials to accomplish in seven days what with materials would occupy the shipwrights of Constantinople for three months. But Mr. Roberts was no red-tapist—he was a genuine English seaman with a practical genius. True he had neither timber wherewith to construct the boats, nor time to put the pieces together. But the long caiques of the country were to be had in any number. They would supply sufficient floatage. "Put them together," said he, "cover them with wooden platforms sufficiently wide, and you will have a collection of landing rafts safe and capacious, not only more manageable than flats, but constructed at an infinitely smaller cost, and within a much shorter time." Such was the theory. "But," said the great men in command, "is this practicable?—will these rafts do?" "Here is one," said the seaman "as an experiment." "Then have you the materials for the planking?" They continued. "I foresaw the emergency," said Roberts, "and I have already got deals of the proper length and thickness for that purpose." The sagacious man had, in short, provided everything—purchased everything; all this, however, he remembered, he had done at his own personal risk, by bribes and earnest monies, after in vain urging Admiral Boxer and others to aid him. "Only give me," he said, "hands, money and authority, and I shall be ready in a week." "If you do it," said Sir George Brown, "you deserve the thanks of the whole army." He did do it; but how? Working night and day, with head and hand—heart and soul in the effort—here, there, and everywhere—with his shirt sleeves up to his shoulders—marking timber, sawing plank, driving bolts—with his motley crew of ship carpenters, common soldiers, Turks, Greeks, and Armenians—stimulating this man by praise, that man by bribes, another by threats—all by his example—thus did this remarkable man accomplish that, to attempt which

seemed to others madness. In the words of Sir George John Cayley, whose eloquent narrative we follow throughout: "He had declared war with impossibility; and how he wrestled with his incubus enemy—drenched in sweat and choked in dust under a broiling sun in the arsenal on the Golden Horn—made the men who saw him marvel." Lord Lyons came down to see. It was the third day of the gigantic task, and not one pontoon was finished. The Admiral shook his head. But Mr. Roberts replied, "if I attempted to finish one at a time I should certainly fail. I am getting the several parts ready for the whole, and that done, I shall put them together all at once." On the fifth day, Lord Lyons said, "Well, Roberts, I am quite satisfied now. I see you know what you are about, and will get through it. I'll now join the Admiral."

Within the seven days the last nail was in. But the struggle had been deadly. Several of the men died of the exertion, and Roberts himself was carried on board his ship insensible, and remained so for some hours. His constitution had indeed received a shock from which it never really recovered, but for the time he got better. He superintended the landing of the troops, and his pontoons answered to perfection. So ended the first act.

On the 17th October 1854, in the sea attack on Sebastopol, Roberts towed the Bellerophon into the thickest of the action. His ship, the Cyclops, was the only towing vessel that fought her own guns. He was the first in and the last out of the fray. "Too much praise," said Admiral Lyons to Roberts, "cannot be given to you for your management of the Cyclops in this attack." It was indeed a gallant business, however unsuccessful. The officers deserved promotion, and they got it. All lieutenants engaged became commanders, all commanders of steamers became post captains and C.B.s. But what of Roberts? He was only a master. True, by an Order in Council of the 19th of May 1846, it had been declared that "in the event of any particularly 'distinguished service,' the Admiralty might promote masters of two years' service to the rank of commander without the ordinary two years as lieutenant. True, Lord Lyons wrote to him, "I really don't know what we should have done without you." Nevertheless—incredible as it may seem—this Master, who had literally made the Crimean expedition possible, got—*nothing*. Sir Charles Wood and Sir Maurice Berkeley—the brother-in-law of Admiral Grey and the persecutor of the naval surgeons—would rather kill a master than

consent to place him among the commanders. Happily this was not the feeling of the Generals and Admirals in the Black Sea. They knew the merits of poor Roberts better than a jobbing whig or an insolent and selfish aristocrat. "How is it," asked the gallant Lord Raglan, "among all the promotions that have come out there is no mention of Roberts, who really did more for us than anybody?" "I am quite distressed," wrote Admiral Lyons, "not to see Roberts's name in the late list of Black Sea promotions. Lord Raglan, Sir George Brown, and I wrote as strongly as possible in his favour, and I do so again this very post." It was all in vain. Come what might Sir Charles Wood and Sir Maurice Berkeley would have no Master a Commander. What mattered it to them that a man of practical genius like Roberts had spent his own hard-earned savings, had toiled himself to death in the public service, and was then breaking his heart under their neglect and official tyranny? But human endurance has its limits. The Cyclops broke down and was sent to Malta. So was her gallant Master. Writing to his wife on January 7, 1855, Roberts says:—"I was completely knocked up from over fatigue. On the 7th of December, I wrote to Sir E. Lyons, telling him, in very plain terms, that I felt myself an ill-used man, and asked him point blank to get me made a Commander." He is appointed Master-Attendant at Malta; but it will not do. In March he is in hospital. In May he writes, "I cannot write much: a leaning position is so painful. My disease, which was not understood at first, turns out to be dropsy in the chest. I hope soon for news from England about my promotion." Vain dream! His name, indeed, had been mentioned in the House of Commons. Admiral Berkeley had been asked whether Roberts had received promotion for his distinguished services. The Admiral replied that "*he had been promoted.*" The House cheered. The Admiral and other officers at Malta congratulated Roberts on his promotion. But it was all a mistake. He had, indeed, been promoted to the rank of Master, eight years before; and Sir James Graham had appointed him Master of the Cyclops, and as such Roberts had done that for which the House of Commons wished to reward him. But Sir Maurice Berkeley would not have it. With something like a lie on his lips he took his stand between this poor Master and the gratitude of his country. Months pass; no promotion comes. Over exertion and blasted hopes are doing their work. At length he reaches Haslar Hospital on the 30th of June, 1855, in a dying state. His wife

hurries to his bedside. She finds her husband heart broken and delirious. "Sometimes better," she says, "sometimes worse; always dwelling on the treatment he has received for his services."

In November, 1855, Roberts leaves Haslar Hospital a confirmed invalid. "There is only one prescription," says the doctor, "for his case: a commander's commission and perfect rest and tranquility for at least a year." The thing is impossible. Sir Charles Wood with his own hand writes to Roberts, saying that he is obviously a broken down man, and therefore cannot be put on the active list of commanders. First bring an officer to death's door by neglect, and then refuse promotion because he is unfit for service. Admirably ingenious—exquisitely cruel! But a motion on the subject of Mr. Roberts is among the Parliamentary Notices. The Admiralty are in a mess and something must be done. At once all about his unfitness for active employment is ignored. He is appointed in succession to two arduous situations, as Master Attendant of Haulbowline and Plymouth Victualling-yard. But the work is too much for him: nevertheless, with his old indomitable spirit, even after he can no longer walk, he is wheeled about in a chair. At length the end approaches. He has got neither promotion nor money's worth. His wife will have nothing. He writes to the Admiralty for some compensation for all the money he spent on his famous pontoons. The Admiralty demand vouchers and proofs. Vouchers and proofs, indeed, from the man who had landed 25,000 men on an enemy's coast, and had got *nothing!* *Si monumentum queris, circumspice.* Once more, from his deathbed, he makes a last appeal. That appeal is forwarded by his widow, for the same day on which he wrote it he died. The Admiralty are inexorable: she is entitled to no compensation, and an annuity of 50*l.* as a master's widow is all that the wife of Robert Wilson Roberts has received from a grateful country.

Such is the history, as related by Sir G. Cayley in these columns, of this humble but neglected hero. We have waited some days to see if it would elicit contradiction or reply. None has reached us. We may assume, therefore, that the statement is substantially true. Assuredly, "no words of sorrow or of anger need be added to awaken the regret and indignation" of every Englishman who hears the tale. The Press has now done its duty by proclaiming to the world that gross injustice which the responsible Ministers of the Crown have



dared to perpetrate in the name of country. But it remains for the House of Commons to grant fitting redress.

Here we have conclusive evidence, not only as to the manner in which meritorious services in the Navy are requited, but evidence of a discreditable nature in the fact that when the case of this victim was brought before the House of Commons (the only tribunal of appeal open to Naval and Military men) we find a naval Lord misleading the House by the assertion of *an untruth* as to Roberts "*having been promoted,*" by which he elicited "the cheers of the House," the Admiral and other officers at Malta, where Roberts was then stationed, congratulated him accordingly, until it was discovered to have been "all a mistake," or probably "*a happy manœuvre,*" as *The Times* represented the battle of Albuera to have been gained by Lord Hardinge, by which that officer obtained a reputation that contributed in no small degree to his elevation to the peerage amongst other advantages, during the number of years that elapsed before this was also discovered to have been "*a mistake.*" The mistake in the case of poor Roberts however had the effect of aiding in the speedy termination of his existence, which must have afforded some gratification to those who are thus represented "as more disposed to kill a master than consent to place him on the list of Commanders, as what mattered it to them that a man of practical genius, like Roberts, had spent his own hard earnings and toiled himself to death in the public service, and was then breaking his heart under neglect and official tyranny?"

So long as the nation submits to this exclusive system

which opens the doors to promotion only to aristocratic classes, these classes are perfectly right to maintain their supremacy, but if the object of all advocates for a reform in parliament as a preliminary step to the reformation of other abuses, is to provide against such calamities as those experienced during the Crimean war, from the incompetency of such aristocratic scions as are entrusted with the administration of our naval and military affairs, the more the evils of such a system are exposed, the greater will be the chances of their being remedied, before the safety of the nation itself shall be imperilled by the threatened war on our own shores.

Amongst the various articles and publications in *The Times*, and other papers, the following leading article from that paper on the Crimean war may be of some service :—

“Are we, or are we not, to publish the letters that pour in from the Crimea? The question no longer concerns the graphic narratives of “our Own Correspondent,” for in this respect, just now, thanks to some amiable eccentricity of the post, we are rather behindhand. The question now concerns letters long and many, some original, from serjeants and privates, some copied by fair and anxious hands, from officers of all ranks in the army, from old colonels to youthful lieutenants,—from every body, in fact, excepting only the members of that faithful cordon that surrounds each General. Two months ago we could not have seen the letter of an officer containing some trifling reflections on the inevitable mishaps of an army on the march or in the field without being laid under the most solemn obligation not to publish it, or at least to disguise the source of our information. Now the whole army rushes into print. Parents, wives, brothers, the whole family circle, as if they no longer cared for promotion and had forgotten the Horse Guards, urge us to publish, and tell the whole truth. It is *life* that is now uppermost in their thoughts—life, excepting only that a still sadder alternative than even death will occasionally obtrude itself. It is possible to purchase life by disgrace, but there is not a

soldier's wife or parent in this country who would not rather hear of his death, even by famine, by cholera, or at his post in the trenches, than that the honour of England had been compromised, and this vast human sacrifice wholly thrown away. While such, however, are the thoughts that distract half the noble and gentle households of this country, no wonder that reserve and the fear of official anger are cast aside, and we are entreated to publish each miserable narrative scrawled in the camp before Sebastopol. If we do so, it is the necessity of our position to let our comments follow the course of our intelligence, and not to cling to old hopes or idle conventionalities when we are confronted by the stern realities of the case, as related in our own columns. We can take no other basis than authentic intelligence, and hundreds of letters tell, in uniform language, the almost total disorganization of our army in the Crimea, and its awful jeopardy, not from the Russians, but from an enemy nearer home—*its own utter mismanagement*. If we closed our columns and refused to publish a single letter from the Crimea, it would only be to give greater weight to the letters that fill the columns of our contemporaries and which they are obliged to publish, even though in the very same page a silly leader, written with the flippancy of an ill-conditioned schoolboy, affects to make light of our 'exaggerations.'

"It can no longer be doubted, or even denied, that the expedition to the Crimea is in a state of entire disorganization. All attempts to deny it only end in admitting the fact, and all excuses only throw the blame from one department to another. There is not a single thing requisite to the efficiency of an army, excepting only the personal courage of officers and men, that is not gone almost beyond the reach of remedy. At the last date the army was on half-rations; some regiments were two days without food; the soldiers, and even most of the officers, were miserably ill-clad and ill-shod; still without any sufficient protection from the rain overhead and the pool under foot; they lived in perpetual water and damp; there was no drainage, and the whole camp was a sea of mud and filth, the hospital marquees being surrounded by the worst nuisances. There was still no road from the port at Balaklava. Three or four thousand horses had perished from hunger, exposure, and overwork, and the remaining few were reduced to mere skeletons; several regiments had been draughted off to do the duty of beasts of burden, in carrying food and

other supplies from the port to the camp; the winter clothing that had arrived at Balaklava could not be distributed, simply because there were not the means of conveying it to the camp; the mortality was certainly not less than 60 a-day, while the number daily sent to the hospitals and not expected to resume service during the winter was very much greater; there was a want of guns, of mortars, of shot, of shells, of fuel, of materials to make huts—of everything whatever necessary not merely to offensive or defensive operations, but to mere existence; and the army was disappearing or only sustained by daily reinforcements, not because it was in the face of the enemy, but simply, as it would in the heart of a desert, for want of all things by which life is supported. We cannot glance over the letters before us without discovering more and more deficiencies. As for the soldiers, poor fellows! they know their own wants, and that is all they can tell. The officers either look death in the face, and resolve to stay on, or escape home on some pretence or other, sickened of a service which refuses fair play to the greatest courage and skill. The medical officers, no ill judges, were predicting that two-thirds of the army would perish before March. Everybody of any energy and sense was sinking, not into apathy or inertness, but into despair. Meanwhile, Lord Raglan had scarcely been seen since the Battle of Inkermann. There was a general belief that he did not know the state of things, that he felt himself wholly unequal to amend it, and that he accordingly kept out of sight of the ills he could not remove.

“Unfortunately for the credit of those in command, but fortunately for truth and the eventual interests of this country, there existed the means of ascertaining how far this frightful disorder was inseparable from the design of the expedition, the situation of the army, and the climate, and how far it was the result of mismanagement. There was the French army, nearly twice the number, hard by. Here all was different. The men were still well fed, and well-looking, not the skeletons and scarecrows to which our own countrymen have dwindled, they were well clothed and retained even some smartness of uniform, while our soldiers were creeping about with haybands round their feet and in great coats that scarce held together; their huts were, generally, up and weather-tight; they had plenty of food, with the command even of luxuries; they had a sufficiency of waggons and ambulances, with great abundance of mules in good condition; they could lend men to make a road for us, having completed a hard road from their own

harbour before the bad weather set in. The contrast prevailed throughout every department, and was brought home to the British soldier in the most painful manner. Thus it was with something between admiration and disgust that the British army, which had not seen anything more than the anatomy of a horse for many a day, and which was obliged to harness forty to drag up one gun, saw the ambulance mules *lent to us by the French for the conveyance of our own sick* as well fed and strong as the day they were landed at Gallipoli. Wherever the British come across the French it is to witness the same mortifying contrast, and it is impossible not to draw the conclusion that the French are an army, and the British are not. In all domestic and civil affairs we pride ourselves on our organization, order, neatness, comfort and abundance of all the materials of health and strength. In the scale of war we are found utterly wanting in these things. It is impossible to check the process of reasoning which refers to the fault of system a difference so marked and so disgraceful. The British soldier cannot but perceive that the Frenchman is commanded by *officers who understand their profession*, and, what is more, feel a paramount interest in the condition of the common soldier, whereas this cannot be the case in his own army.

“ But what is to be done ? The answer, of course, in some quarters is ‘ Nothing.’ There are indeed people, and they not without patriotism, who would rather the expedition were wholly unsuccessful and that the British Isles sank under the ocean, than that one iota of *the official system, of patronage, of seniority*, and of all that semblance of order, that has kept up the illusion of military strength through a profound peace of forty years, should be rudely swept away or reformed. There are people who would think it a less unhappy consummation of affairs that the Commander-in-Chief and his staff should survive alone on the heights of Sebastopol, decorated, ennobled, duly named in despatch after despatch, and ready to return home to enjoy pensions and honours, amid the bones of fifty thousand British soldiers, than that the equanimity of office and the good humour of society should be disturbed by a single recall, or a new appointment over the heads of those now in command. These people, of course, assume that success is no test of energy and skill, or that energy and skill are of no importance in the conduct of an army, which in war, as in peace, is only a *Government organ for the advancement of the aristocracy* and the support of the Ministry for the

time being. We protest most solemnly against this view of our army or any other view, except the simplest possible one,—that an army is an organ for the defence of a country against its enemies, and the maintenance of its interests and honour, and should, at every reasonable cost of money and of feeling, be made as effective as possible. We will not admit that that which has been must continue to be, or that the present working of the army in its higher ranks has at all justified its management for the last forty years, even though the name of the Great Duke be cited in favour of it. No. If the wreck of the army, if the honour of our country, if the great cause at stake, if the position of the British empire, are to be saved, it must be by throwing overboard, without a day's delay, all scruples of personal friendship, of official punctilio, of aristocratic feeling and *courtly subservience*, and immediately putting experience, ability, energy, and merit, even in their roughest and most unpalatable forms, in the conduct, and even at the head of affairs. There can be no interest greater than that of the whole common weal, for with its downfall every other must sink to a common destruction. So no reason can be given, and no excuse will be admitted, against immediately superseding in their commands those who have proved themselves to be incapable of performing the duties to which favour, seniority, or mistake has advanced them. After all, it is no disgrace to a man that he does not possess the genius of a Wellington or even of a Hill. But it is a crime in a War Minister to permit an officer to remain for a single day in the nominal discharge of duties the neglect of which has brought a great and victorious army to the verge of ruin."

That the cause of this "total disorganization of our army in the Crimea" arose from mismanagement, the absence of any administrative system, and the incompetency of the Commander-in-Chief and heads of departments was most amply proved before the parliamentary committee obtained by Mr. Roebuck, and most amply justifies the foregoing observations of *The Times*, "That whenever the British came across the French in the Crimea it was to witness the *mortifying contrast* which rendered it impossible not to draw the conclusion,

that the French were an army and the British were not. That the French men '*were commanded by officers who understood their profession,*' and, *what is more, feel a paramount interest in the condition of the common soldier, which was not the case in our army.* That there are people who would rather the expedition were wholly unsuccessful, and that the British Isles sunk under the ocean, than that one iota of the official system, of patronage, of seniority, and of all that semblance of order, that has kept up the illusion of military strength through a profound peace of forty years, should be rudely swept away or reformed. That there are people who would think it a less unhappy consummation of affairs that the Commander-in-chief and his Staff should survive alone on the heights of Sebastopol decorated, ennobled, duly named in despatch after despatch, and ready to return home to enjoy pensions and honours amid the bones of fifty thousand British soldiers, than that the equanimity of office and the good humour of society should be disturbed by a single recall or a new appointment over the heads of those then in command. That these people of course assumed that success was no test of energy or skill, nor that energy and skill were of any importance in the conduct of an army, which in war, as in peace, is only *a government organ for the advancement of the aristocracy and the support of the ministry for the time being.*"

Had the facts of the case of Roberts been known at the time this article appeared, the navy as well as the army might have been included "as government organs for the advancement of the aristocracy," as there was no instance in the army during that war of a man so

pre-eminently qualified for command and its corresponding rewards as that of Roberts, who saved the army from perishing by disease in the pestilential swamps of Varna, when peremptory orders arrived from England in the autumn of 1854 to make a descent on the Crimean coast. This our naval and military chiefs, aided by the reports of the shipwrights at Constantinople, considered "*an impossibility*," three months being looked upon as the shortest period within which the requisite number of flat bottomed boats could have been prepared for that purpose, which would have brought them into the middle of winter. Amongst the Admirals and Generals all was perplexity, when Roberts stepped forward and told them that if he had his own way he would do all that was required in a week. Preposterous as the proposition appeared they gave him his own way, even so far as paying money *out of his own pocket (which was never repaid)*, toiling night and day in his shirt sleeves to the permanent injury of his own health, and the *fête* was accomplished within the time as already stated, and the apprehended fate of the army in the swamps of Varna averted. Then when the naval attack on Sebastopol was decided upon, Roberts *was selected to lead the way*, towing the Bellerophon into the thickest of the action, his ship, the Cyclops, being the only towing vessel that fought her own guns. He was the first in the fray and the last out of it, and was told by Lord Lyons "*that too much praise could not be given him for his conduct and management of the Cyclops in that attack*," for which all first-Lieutenants engaged were made Commanders ; and all Commanders of



Steamers, Post Captains and C.B.s—but no notice taken of Roberts. “How is it,” asked Lord Raglan, “that there is no mention of Roberts, who really did more for us than any body?” “I am quite distressed,” wrote Admiral Lyons, “not to see Roberts’s name in the list of Black Sea promotions, Lord Raglan, Sir George Brown and I wrote as strongly as possible in his favor, and I do so again by this very post.” If the only answer was that adverted to in the article of the *Daily News*, this act of injustice should not be overlooked—“That the Lords of the Admiralty would rather kill a master than consent to place him amongst the aristocratic classes of Commanders, as what mattered it to them that a man of practical genius, like Roberts, had spent his own hard-earned savings, had toiled himself to death in the public service, and was then breaking his heart under their neglect and official tyranny?”

Had this case been known to *The Times*, the navy would no doubt have been included with the army “as Government organs for the advancement of the aristocracy.”

Having thus given extracts from articles in *The Times* and *Daily News* respecting the army and navy, the following from the *Morning Advertiser* on the Engineering department may not be unacceptable as it has reference to a difference of opinion between Sir John Burgoyne, our Chief Military Engineer in the Crimea, and Mr. Fergusson, a celebrated Civil Engineer :—

## SIR JOHN BURGOYNE AND MR. FERGUSON ON EARTHWORKS AND THE DEFENCE OF SEBASTOPOL.

“ Now, although we refrain from offering an opinion upon the more scientific points at issue, yet, when we find Sir John Burgoyne ‘ travelling out of the record,’ we cannot help adverting to some of his observations in praise of the Russian troops, and to his reflections on those whom he is pleased to term ‘ gentlemen of England who live at home in ease,’ because they have ventured to criticise, and even find severe fault with, a General and other authorities during the siege, ‘ without reflecting that the Russians were a short distance from, and had good roads to their resources, while the British were several miles from theirs, and had a great height and terrific roads intervening.’

“ We very much question whether the Russians did not overcome much greater difficulties in supplying and recruiting their army than ever fell to our lot, and caused the fearful losses which occurred to our army.

“ Since Sir John Burgoyne himself happened to be the General to whom the whole of the operations for conducting that siege was, at the commencement, confided, and since we were among the number of those ‘ gentlemen of England,’ who considered it a duty incumbent on us to animadvert on some of the supposed errors that were widely commented on, we shall most willingly make the *amende honorable* to the gallant General, should the facts that have subsequently transpired prove in his favour,—if, for instance, it can be proved that he had nothing to do with the mismanagement which occasioned the reduction of 54,000 men that left England, to 14,000 that were doing duty in the Crimea, as stated by Mr. Roebuck, when he moved for the Sebastopol Committee, to inquire into this extraordinary diminution. Was not that diminution principally occasioned by the sufferings and privations to which the men were exposed from being overworked and underfed? Was it not from having, with inferior numbers to our Allies the French, been required to *do double duty in the trenches*, having been allowed to rest only every second night, while the French enjoyed that advantage four nights out of five, with good roads to supply them with provisions, and only one half of the distance from their resources? It may be alleged that the fortune of war gave them

a better position. Ought not this, we say, to have entered into the consideration and fore-thought of a General of engineers? Was it not the first duty of a chief engineer to render the road, which afterwards became impassable, serviceable for siege operations during the dry weather?

“ We do not conceive that the officer in question is entitled to any apologies from us or any of the correspondents of the Press, when we hear that on his recall to give evidence before the Committee, he admitted by his replies that all the arrangements connected with the siege were entrusted exclusively to him,—that it was he who determined the excessive extent of the trenches that fell to the British army; that such apportionment was condemned by many of our general officers, who made representations to that effect; that before the wet weather set in, he never gave any orders, or held any consultation with others about this road, although he knew that it would become, what he termed a ‘*mud-hole*,’—that he was aware that there was abundance of limestone lying about, together with a supply of sledge hammers, and about 10,000 pickaxes and shovels,—that he recollected a part of this road which had become impassable by reason of springs that might have been repaired by a dozen men with a few of these stones; that, notwithstanding all this, he never made or caused to be made any representations on the subject to the authorities in the Crimea, or at home, any more than he did as to his having been too scantily furnished to carry on the extent of operations which he had undertaken.

“ When such admissions as the above were made by the principal officer entrusted with the conduct of this siege, it is difficult to account for these voluntary and gratuitous reflections, after the lapse of twelve months, upon those who, from evidence of letters received from the camp before Sebastopol, represented their brave countrymen to be rotting in the trenches, from criminal neglect and blunders. Yes, it is true that they presumed to speak and write of this, as well as of the clothing and provisions that lay piled and heaped at Balaklava, as useless to our army as if they had been 3000 miles distant instead of six. Not only did we, of the Press, but the entire people of England, find incapacity pervading all the departments of our army, both at home and abroad. Thus, notwithstanding our enormous wealth, numberless ships, great popular enthusiasm, and the best materials in the world for soldiers, our army was the worst clad, the worst fed, and

the worst sheltered, of any at the seat of war. Wealth frittered away in various forms, as completely as if it had been flung into the Black Sea; many of the ships, like the Prince, were wrecked. Those that did not founder were continually employed in bringing the wrong things to the wrong people, who sent them in turn to the wrong place and back again! How could it be expected by the humblest slaves of Routine, that such things should be submitted to in silence? And since we neither would nor could be silent, to what was it possible to attribute all this save to the incapacity of our generals or other authorities? We had, indeed, no alternative, unless we felt inclined to adopt some of the spiritual vagaries of our transatlantic brethren, and to believe in the intervention of some invisible agency—*some imperceptible hand holding an agis for the protection of Russia*, paralysing all efforts for the preservation and efficiency of our army, navy, and national defences, and impeding those improvements in the art of war which, in this scientific and practical country, would soon have made ample amends for the numerical inferiority of our forces in comparison with those of our enemy. Had it been the fate of England to contend with Russia single-handed, does any Briton like to admit that we should have been ignominiously worsted? Yet, with this unseen hand against us, where should we have been? Instead of the destructive power of our war-engines being increased as it ought to have been, we have actually found the Russians far superior to us in this respect. We have hitherto allowed them to get possession in a roundabout manner of the very improvements offered to us, and with some of which all of us have been long familiar, with the exception of our authorities, our Board of Ordnance, and consequently, that unfortunate victim, the British soldier. We fear that this winter will also tell a tale of deficiency of arrangements in hutting, in supplies, and in roads before Sebastopol. We are inclined to ask why the cavalry was sent back? Was it not because of the want of supplies, and this, with half the transports of Great Britain cruising about, some of them making half-a-dozen absurd trips with wrong cargoes, between Malta, Constantinople, Balaklava, and back, with variations? But into this, we can scarcely enter. If the winter of 1854 be paralleled, or even approached by that of 1855, it is not the fault of the Press; but of incapable officials, military and civil, and possibly of the 'unseen hand.'

"Should there exist such unseen influence, should it be made known

that there is a 'power behind the Throne stronger than the Throne itself,' incapables should look to it; for it is their sole defence. Let Generals and authorities who have been reflected upon by the organ of public opinion, bring this forward in their defence, and if they have no reason to dread mock committees and packed sham investigations, let them at least offer what excuse they can to History for that which has been done in their names. Such, at least, is the advice of one of those organs of public opinion, whom collectively Sir John Burgoyne has been pleased to designate as 'critics who had no knowledge of the business of which they constituted themselves supreme judges.' We should like to see a daily paper conducted for a single day with that knowledge of business which regulated the affairs of Balaklava!

"If Mr. Fergusson's propositions possess the merit generally attached to them, or Lord Dundonald's plan be so highly approved of by Sir Charles Napier and other competent judges, or if again, the invention of Sir J. S. Lillie,\* be anything like what we are informed that it is then we must do Sir John Burgoyne the justice to say that he is doing a great national service by raking up all these matters. Though unaware of the benefit he is conferring, he comes forward like a short-sighted Curtius, to stumble into the Balaklava gulf of Routine and Incompetency which threatens to engulf all England. By thus resuscitating subjects that might otherwise, at least for a time, have been suffered to slumber in peace, but which when galvanised by the apparatus brought to bear by such a 'distinguished professor,' will not again be allowed to rest, he will succeed in making them so prominent, that they cannot fail to be considered by more competent authorities than the Admiralty, the Ordnance, or the Horse Guards. We have spoken of Mr. Fergusson, he is employed in justifying the propositions he has laid down and to some purpose—Sir Charles Napier will, doubtless, bring Earl Dundonald's plan before Parliament; but with regard to the third affair, it is not as yet much known, even by rumour. Yet we have seen testimony that would astonish the public, both as to the invention itself, and the manner in which it has been received and treated, by a Government that squanders millions.

\* This experienced officer was shelved for his political opinions, having had the courage to oppose the Duke of Wellington, in 1830, in proposing Mr. Hume for Middlesex, and various resolutions at county meetings in support of the Reform Government of that day.

"Prudence demands during war time that silence should be preserved with respect to the details of the various inventions, which are now bandied about from the wrong persons to the wrong places and back again.

"There are moreover many things to cause 'the blood to tingle' in our Administration besides the absurdity of the Isle-of-Wight fortifications, as demonstrated to the meanest civilian capacity by Mr. Fergusson. We are beginning now to appreciate the failure of duty on the part of Parliament in not bringing to punishment the persons who were guilty of the calamities in the earlier part of the campaign. They blandly trusted to the moral lesson to be drawn by selfishness from the sufferings of others. The consequence is, that there is no improvement, no change save for the worse. We are becoming deadened to injury and humiliation, and familiarised with the worst effects of aristocratic, or oligarchical routine.

"In America there may be democratic tyranny, but the best men win the best places, and so the business of the nation is done. In Russia there is despotical freedom, which causes merit to be excited wherever it is found. Against this we have to contend, hampered by all our faults, follies, and prejudices, bound as we are by the sordid trammels with which a few families are suffered to impede the vital action of the State, from its highest sphere to its lowest. Impunity begets license, and this in turn may cause rebellion, or reaction. In this manner, an individual like Sir John Burgoyne is the unconscious instrument of good, when he will not let ill alone ; but provokes patience and apathy by his endeavour to persuade us that there has been little or no mismanagement in conducting the siege of Sebastopol."

Here we have the principal causes of the reduction of the 54,000 men that left England for the Crimea to 14,000 that were doing duty there, when Mr. Roebuck moved for the Sebastopol Committee, elucidated in an able manner by the Editor of the *Morning Advertiser*, and the admission of the Chief Engineer when recalled to give evidence before that committee, "that all the arrangements connected with the Siege of Sebastopol were entrusted *exclusively* to

him,—that it was he who determined the *excessive extent* of the trenches that fell to the British army,—that such apportionment was condemned by many of our general officers, who made representations to that effect ; and that before the wet weather set in, he never gave any orders or held any consultation with others about this road, although he knew that it would become, what he termed a '*mud-hole*,'—that he was aware that there was abundance of limestone lying about, together with a supply of sledge hammers, and about 1000 pickaxes and shovels,—that notwithstanding all this, he never made or caused to be made any representations on the subject to the authorities in the Crimea, or at home, any more than he did as to his having been too scantily furnished to carry on the extent of operations which he had undertaken !"

Well may the writer of this article proclaim his indignation at the comments of the Chief Engineer who made such admissions, and his voluntary and gratuitous reflections upon those organs of the public press, who, on the evidence of letters received from the Crimea, represented so many thousands of their brave countrymen to be *dying* in the trenches for want of food and clothing while there was an ample abundance of both *rotting* in the stores at Balaclava a few miles distant, owing to the unpardonable oversight and neglect of those to whose care the safety of that army had been confided ; and more especially of this Chief Engineer, who is thus stated to have admitted that he had abundance of materials and a more than ample supply of tools to do all that was required to render this short line of communication between the camp and the shipping as perfect as possible, before the severity

of a Crimean winter set in so as to render such an undertaking *impossible*. He also admitted that it was he who determined "*the excessive extent of the trenches that fell to the British army,*" who, "with inferior numbers to our French allies, had consequently been required to do more than double duty in the trenches, having been allowed only every second night for rest under such disadvantages, while the French (whose superior administrative system left their soldiers nothing to complain of) had four nights' rest out of the five, with good roads to supply them with provisions, and only one-half the distance from their resources."

When a few facts of this nature are culled out of the mass of evidence laid before parliament in blue books, the public is enabled to see them in their proper light, and to express its natural surprise at the responsible parties not being visited with a censure commensurate with such a national calamity, and such unnecessary loss of so many valuable lives. It would have been a still greater matter of surprise to find that a baronetcy had been applied for, and obtained as a matter of course, for services of this nature, which was holding out an inducement to others under similar circumstances to "*go and do likewise.*" When facts of this nature are thus promulgated it is impossible to deny the justice in the foregoing article from *The Times* of the following observations:—

"If the wreck of the army, if the men of our country, if the great cause at stake, if the position of the British Empire are to be saved, it must be by throwing overboard, without a day's delay, all scruples of personal friendship, of official punctilio, of aristocratic feeling and



courtly subservience, and immediately putting *experience, ability, energy* and merit, even in their roughest and most unpalatable forms, in the conduct, and even at the head of affairs. No reason should be given, no excuse admitted against immediately superseding all who have proved themselves incapable of performing the duties to which *favour, seniority or mistake* has advanced them."

When Lord Aberdeen, who was then at the head of the Government, was about to withdraw in consequence of the complaints regarding the maladministration of that war, it was in contemplation to reward him with the order of the Garter, as announced by the following lines which appeared in *The Morning Herald*:—

It is said that the Queen is to give Aberdeen  
The Garter to strengthen his nerves,  
But the people still hope that he'll get a rope  
As that which he better deserves.

This noble Lord did nevertheless get that order on his retirement from office, but the other reward thus adverted to would have been looked upon by the people of England as much better deserved by certain heads of departments more connected with *the seat of war*, than *by the Head of the Government at home*.

The proposition of Mr. Fergusson for substituting earth works for masonry has, notwithstanding the opposition of the Ordnance Department, received due attention as being more economical for fortifications and more expeditiously erected, which are great desiderata when "*the perils of England*" from foreign foes are so much increased.

That of Lord Dundonald has not been as yet made

known, but if it possesses the merit attributed to it the less it is known until the arrival of an enemy on our shores the more effectual is it likely to prove. The following is however a copy of a letter addressed by him to *The Times*, enclosing a petition by his Lordship on the subject to the Commons House of Parliament :—

## SEBASTOPOL AND CRONSTADT.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

Sir,

Peace being desirable not only for the interests of our country but for those of the world at large, and the negotiations now pending being doubtless injuriously influenced by the obstinate resistance of Sebastopol (which could be overcome in a day), and by the impossibility of successfully attacking Cronstadt by naval means (which might be as speedily reduced), I have drawn up a petition to Parliament, in order that secrecy and silence on my part, and deficiency of information on that of the public, may no longer prove injurious to the success of our arms. Hostilities having proceeded so far, assuredly it is more expedient to reduce a restless nation to a third or fourth-rate power than to be ourselves reduced.

Let not my motive be mistaken. I have no wish to command a fleet of 100-gun ships, or to attack first rate fortresses by encased batteries or steam gunboats; that which I desire is, first, secretly to demonstrate to competent persons the efficiency of my plans, and then to obtain authority (during eight or ten days of fine weather) to put them in execution.

The means I contemplate are simple, cheap, and safe in execution. They would spare thousands of lives, millions of money, great havoc, and uncertainty of results. Their consequences might, and probably would, effect the emancipation of Poland and give freedom to the usurped territories of Sweden.

Those who judge unfavourably of all aged naval commanders assuredly do not reflect that the useful employment of the energies of thousands and tens of thousands of men can best be developed and directed by a mind instructed by long observation, matured by reflection; an advantage to which physical power—that could clear its way by a

broad sword—can bear no comparison. My unsupported opinion, in regard to a naval enterprise in 1809, proved to be correct. Every other undertaking in the British service, in which I was concerned, and as commander-in-chief in Chili, Peru, Brazil, and Greece, was successful, and so would the protracted and unaccomplished undertakings, so injurious to the result of negotiation, have succeeded, had I possessed sufficient influence to be patiently listened to.

I am, Sir, your obliged and obedient servant,

March 10, 1855.

DUNDONALD.

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**“ TO THE HON. THE COMMONS IN PARLIAMENT  
ASSEMBLED.**

“The Petition of Thomas Earl of Dundonald, Admiral of the White,

“Humbly sheweth,—That in the year 1811 your petitioner discovered, and after deliberate consideration, had the honour, in the year 1812, to disclose to his Royal Highness the Prince Regent a simple yet irresistible means, whereby ordinary implements in war might be dispensed with and speedy and successful results ensured.

“That His Royal Highness was pleased to appoint a commission to investigate the subject, consisting of the most competent persons of that period, whose report was so favourable that His Royal Highness ordered the attendance of your petitioner, and commanded secrecy, which had been imposed on Lord Keith, Lord Exmouth, and on General and Colonel Congreve; his Royal Highness the Duke of York being president of the commission.

“That with this injunction your petitioner faithfully complied, although he could have put his plans in execution in foreign service to his own great personal advantage. That after your petitioner's return from abroad, and when an apprehension of war had again arisen at home, your petitioner presented his plans to His Majesty King William (who had honoured your petitioner in early life with favour) and whose professional knowledge enabled him to judge of their applicability.

“That His Majesty, satisfied therewith, was pleased, in the most flattering manner, to manifest the high estimation in which he held the loyalty and disinterested conduct of your petitioner.

“That on a subsequent threat of war since the accession of Her present Majesty, the question of the merits of your petitioner's plan

was on a similar occasion submitted to the most Hon. the Cabinet Council, wherein ingenuous and expanded minds, impressed with sentiments similar to those which actuated his late Majesty, recommended and obtained a gracious manifestation of Royal justice.

“That in February and in July, last year, your petitioner again offered his said plans, and sanctioned their reference to a secret commission of naval officers, in order that a professional report might be made as to their practicability and efficiency, which report, however, was confined to an opinion as to their expediency, perhaps originating in an erroneous impression as to the endurance of iron-bound floating batteries, all of which your petitioner will engage to subdue, even were they added to the defences of Cronstadt.

“That your petitioner, foreseeing the impracticability of capturing numerous and powerful fortifications by the means now in preparation, again most respectfully offers his plans and his services to accomplish these objects, reserving the encased batteries and steam gunboats entire, and ready for the brief and easy task of destroying the hostile fleet.

“That your petitioner begs that, should these premises and the prayer hereunto annexed seem to your hon. House exaggerated or unreasonable, you will be pleased to take into your consideration that, had electric communication and photographic delineation been privately known and publicly announced, these incontestable realities would have been received as an insult to the understanding.

“Therefore your petitioner humbly prays that your hon. House will be pleased, by a searching inquiry, to ascertain whether the aforesaid secret plans are capable, speedily, certainly, and cheaply to surmount obstacles which our gallant, persevering, and costly armies and fleets have failed to accomplish.

“DUNDONALD.”

[Presented March 9, 1855.]

Whatever Lord Dundonald's improvements in the art of war may be, it is to be hoped that they will not, like the others already adverted to, become known and adopted by our continental neighbours before their value is admitted by the nation that gave them birth. If we

are to credit the reasons assigned by some of the leading firm of the gun trade, at the Meeting over which Colonel Sykes presided, at Willis's rooms last year (as reported at page 41), for this indisposition to recognize improvements of this nature, it is occasioned by "an unwillingness on the part of the authorities at Woolwich to acknowledge any such improvements which do not emanate from the authorities there," (as instanced in the case of Captain Norton's improvements in the rifle which were first adapted by the French Government) "*from an apprehension that improvements of this nature would throw field artillery into the shade by depriving them of the monopoly of long ranges which they had previously enjoyed.*" So long therefore as the ordnance authorities were looked upon as the sole arbiters in cases of this nature so long should the British nation have submitted to the dictation of this "*imperium in imperio*," and the privation of all improvements in the art of war not emanating from those authorities. When the Duke of Newcastle however found that the Lieutenant-General of the ordnance supported the theoretical report of the ordnance select committee on the improvements submitted by Sir John Lillie in opposition to the practical illustration reported on by the celebrated gun makers, Deane and Adams, after a trial by a battery prepared by themselves, he abolished the Board of Ordnance altogether, and placed that Department under the immediate control of the War Department. But when Lord Panmure succeeded His Grace as Secretary of State for War on the secession of the Peelites, it appears that the committees at Woolwich had a greater latitude than ever. The superiority of the Peelites was however again demon-

strated on General Peel's accession to that office, as it appears by the following extract from an article in *The Morning Post*, that he found it necessary to abolish altogether this Select Committee at Woolwich :—

“ Bitter complaints have been made respecting the piracy of ideas by the Select Committee at Woolwich, of the difficulty of obtaining redress, and, not least, of impediments occasioned by disagreements amongst members of the committee themselves.

“ British inventors may now solace themselves by the reflection that the Select Committee at Woolwich has ceased to exist. It has perished by its own hands. Internal dissensions have been the cause ; thus affording not a little countenance to the accusations so frequently brought against it. For a long time past the members of the committee have been divided into two sections, each antagonistic to the other. A more unfavourable condition to the meting out of abstract justice to inventors cannot easily be imagined. At length the antagonism became so strong that the committee was a positive hindrance to the service, which fact becoming known in high quarters, summary work was made with it, and its existence, after a period of seventy years' duration, was brought to a close.

“ In the place of the Woolwich Select Committee, now so happily released, a Coast Defence Committee is to be organised in connection with a school of artillery at Shoeburyness, to the scrutiny of which all projects suggested for the use of the public service will be submitted. We understand that in the constitution of this body the fundamental rule will be recognised that no head of department in Woolwich, or any other arsenal, is to be eligible. Members of the Coast Defence Committee will be '*public servants, not public masters*,' as individuals composing the Woolwich committee were heretofore ; and care will be taken that inventions submitted in confidence shall not be appropriated without consent and acknowledgment. A very expressive peculiarity of the new organisation has now to be announced. Artillery officers, heads of manufacturing departments, are to be called upon to elect either to be civilians or military men ; they are either to retire on half-pay, or else to give up their positions.

“ Inventors will have reason to be thankful for this change of organisation. It did seem anomalous that heads of departments should sit

in judgment on the merits of a proposition which might affect their own cherished routine or hurt their *amour propre*. Nevertheless the experience of all countries teaches that, unless professional *amour propre* be lacerated now and then, many a valuable discovery will drop still-born, and professional science will lose its best stimulus and aid."

From the facts adverted to in this article, General Peel appears to have conferred as great a benefit on the public service as the Duke of Newcastle did when he abolished the Board of Ordnance with all its costly and obstructive tendencies. Had Mr. Sidney Herbert, the former colleague of his Grace and present Secretary of State for War, the power to carry out still more important reforms he would no doubt put an end to the purchase and jobbing system, which has been recently much complained of and so much exposed by the public press, more particularly by *The Times* in the case of a Mr. Cunningham, who, contrary to the rules by which the obtaining of commissions had been regulated, (this gentleman being over the age prescribed by these rules), was refused a commission by purchase by the Commander-in-Chief, he nevertheless succeeded in getting gazetted for less than the regulated price, on having recourse to indirect means, or, to use the words of the Military Secretary, "when recommended by persons of consideration and position in society," as explained in the following extract from a letter addressed to the Editor of *The Times* in April last, in which all the details are clearly explained under the heading of "*Commission Jobbing*":—

"You show how Mr. Cunningham gained little or nothing by resorting

to his tailors for his commission as well as for his uniform after having been pronounced superannuated by the Commander-in-Chief, how he had to undergo the usual examination, how he had to procure the usual testimonials, and how he had to pay within 50*l.* of the regulation price—the London tailors selling commissions in the Line but 12 per cent. cheaper than the Horse Guards.

“But you seem to forget, Sir, that by applying to his tailor Mr. Cunningham got his commission, after having been refused it when he applied to the Horse Guards, and that if he had not been thus illegally assisted by Messrs. Armstrong and Colonel Steinbach he would never have been a Queen’s officer at all.

“In his first letter to the Commander-in-Chief Mr. Cunningham details the military services of his family, and refers his Royal Highness for corroboration of his assertions and of his own personal fitness and respectability to Major-General Sir R. Vivian, K.C.B. He states his age—over 21. He inquires whether, if that be a bar to his obtaining a direct commission in the Line, he can get over it by being filtered into the service through the Militia.

“To this application he receives the following reply—a conclusive one:—‘You are too old; *you cannot be admitted into the service on any terms.*’

“That is all. No explanation is vouchsafed to this son and grandson of meritorious officers, with which class the Horse Guards profess to sympathize so much; he is not recommended to obtain written testimonials from Sir R. Vivian; he is simply informed that he cannot be permitted to enter the army at all, in consequence of an obstacle which he cannot possibly remove—*his age*.

“He returns, however, to the charge, and respectfully renews his inquiry as to his chance of coming in *via* the Militia. ‘The information required in Mr. Cunningham’s second letter was not supplied, the application itself being of course irregular,’ says Sir Charles Yorke, in his evidence at the police-court.

“Well, the eager candidate for a commission, after being refused by the Commander-in-Chief and snubbed by Sir Charles Yorke, betakes himself in his extremity to his tailors, and implores their aid. They see no difficulty at all in the matter. They first of all find him a military friend who stands well with the Horse Guards to recommend him to his Royal Highness—for a consideration. One Colonel Steinbach,



of the British German Legion, who dates his letters to the Commander-in-Chief from a club to which he does not belong (*vide* the letter of the secretary of the University Club in your impression of this day), and who has now gone abroad, has an interview with his Royal Highness, and warmly recommends Mr. Cunningham.

"That gentleman's age immediately ceases to be any bar to his entrance into the service, and he gets his commission without purchase at once. The tailoring firm extort 400*l.* from him for the share they have had in the arrangement, pay 50*l.* of it to the influential Colonel Steinbach, and quarrel over the division of the rest of the spoil.

"Sir Charles Yorke, Military Secretary to the Commander-in-Chief, on being examined, stated 'his belief that Colonel Steinbach was well known at the Horse Guards and to the Commander-in-Chief;' he recollected that 'on a former occasion another commission had been granted on his recommendation.' But when his Royal Highness was questioned as to his knowledge of that obliging officer, whose address is just now 'Post-office, Bremen,' he replied, 'I do not know where Colonel Steinbach is at the present moment; what should I know about him? He has nothing to do with the Horse Guards or with me.'

"Nevertheless it appears that he can get commissions without purchase for his young friends when he wants to do so, and that when he does so he is not above receiving *tangible marks of their gratitude*. And if Colonel Steinbach acts thus, it is presumable that a good many more of the hangers-on at the Horse Guards do likewise. A Mr. Stocqueler's name indeed was mentioned by the Commander-in-Chief as having applied very often for commission 'in the regular way.' His Royal Highness said that he might have applied for as many as 18 or 20 commissions—10,000*l.* worth.

"Yet it appears from the evidence of Sir Charles Yorke that he knows less of Mr. Stocqueler than the Commander-in-Chief knew of Colonel Steinbach; that though he had once seen him at the Horse Guards he had no acquaintance with him, and that he had never heard that he had been employed in illicit traffic in commissions.

"It would appear, moreover, that the regulations laid down with regard to age are only used as an excuse for refusing candidates who are not, to use Sir C. Yorke's own words, '*recommended by persons of consideration and position in society*.'" A man of 30, so backed, finds his age, according to Sir C. Yorke, no obstacle whatever to procure

a commission. A lad of 19, highly educated, the grandson of one of our most distinguished officers killed in Spain, was, to my own knowledge, flatly refused permission to purchase a commission in 1857, because he was alleged to be too old. A person of position in society was induced to say a word for him, and his age instantly ceased to be considered an impediment to his entrance into the service.

“ Within the last month a Mr. Blacket, a man considerably above the usual age, is stated by Sir Charles Yorke to have obtained a commission in the Cavalry ; ‘but, then,’ says Sir Charles, ‘I think he had a claim.’ It would be useful to future applicants to know the nature of such a claim.

“ Can anything be worse than the existing system, as illustrated by the officers who administer it ?

“ When Colonel Steinbach is tried by Court Martial for the part he has played in this business ; when Mr. Cunningham’s commission has been cancelled for having connived at and profited by Messrs. Armstrong’s illicit practices ; when Mr. Bridson has been prosecuted for having offended against the 49th George III., cap. 126, sec. 8 ; and when Sir C. Yorke explains the principles of the elastic regulations with respect to the ages of candidates for commissions, the public may believe that the Horse Guards are in earnest in putting an end to the existing system of commission jobbing—but not till then.

“ April 20.

A CIVILIAN.”

Such are the anomalies of our military system, and the evils of divided responsibility, that our present War Minister has no more power to provide against Jobbing of this description than he has to abolish the system by which the possession of wealth is constituted the standard of military merit, but as it appears that he has the power of making selections for important commands it is to be hoped he will exercise it with a greater regard to military merit than aristocratic connections, as being a member of the Commons House of Parliament he is not likely to get such support in that House for aristocratic

selections as Lord Panmure did in the other House, in April 1857, on the occasion of his having selected the Hon. General Ashburnham for the command of our army in China, on the breaking out of the war there. On that occasion, *The Times*, in a leading article, thought proper to observe, that of this celebrated General little was at that time known, and that little more favorable to his discretion than his valour, a view of the case that was corroborated by various letters from officers whose knowledge of *certain facts* appeared to justify their concurrence in the opinion thus expressed by the Editor of that paper. Lord Panmure, considering himself reflected upon by these publications, stood up for his order in the House of Lords, and, with the aid of other Peers, threatened the press and the writers of these letters with condign punishment. As some of the details of this case were given by *The Times*, on the 8th of that month, in the following article, its republication, at a period like the present when we are threatened with dangers that require efficient commanders to combat them, may be the means of preventing other War Ministers from running the great vessel of the State and its valiant defenders on such rocks and shoals as those upon which she had nearly foundered while that noble Lord was at the head of the war department :—

“The question between us and Lord Panmure, which was almost the only subject of debate last night, is exceedingly simple. Lord Panmure demands for his patronage immunity from all but the most formal and official remarks ; he claims a freedom of choice secure from all public criticism. No doubt, there is much to be said for such a pretension. We are sufficiently alive to the advantages of an irre-

sponsible military administration such as that which obtains more or less under what are called the great Military Powers. But there is all the difference in the world between the case of those Powers and our own. There is no such thing as patronage, in the pleasant, kindly, domestic, gentlemanly, free-and-easy English, Irish, and Scotch sense of the word, in either Russia, for example, or France. There is little or no *military nepotism* in those countries, no irresistible influence of charming ladies, no social interchange of official kindnesses, or family messages whispered under cover of public despatches. Under the stern reign of a military despotism the cadets of the most illustrious houses give way to the claims of the modest soldier of fortune, from whatever class—nay, whatever country, he may present himself. In such a state of things the Press can have no occupation, except possibly to institute now and then a purely scientific comparison between the tactics or genius of this soldier and that. In England all is different. Here, besides Her Majesty and her Court—models of domestic life, and shedding a virtuous influence over the land,—we have *the most powerful aristocracy in the world*, and within it an oligarchy of a few families which has kept the chief offices of the Government in its hands for nearly two centuries. We do not quarrel with this; we only mention it just to remind our readers that this is not a case for absolute irresponsibility. There must be a check somewhere. It is not provided, however, in the exigencies of a despotism, in the one will and one mind of a dictator. It is but slightly supplied by a Parliamentary interference or legal complaints before regular tribunals. It is provided, as it can only be provided in a free State and a mixed constitution like ours, by the voice of public opinion; and at this time of day it is scarcely necessary to show that this is maintained by the Press. When, then, a Minister gets up in Parliament and protests against all criticism on his patronage; he pretends to deny the right of an officer to publish the contents of his own notebook if they tend in any degree to the prejudice of another; when, in addition to all this, we have military and naval officers getting up to express their utter contempt for the opinions of civilians; and when, lastly, the House of Lords is only too happy to contribute its cheers to the sacred cause of official irresponsibility, we can only reply that all these gentlemen, Ministers, Generals, Admirals, and Peers, forget where they are. Were they in Russia or in France—that is, if they

could exist there—they would at least be acting quite in character with the institutions of the country ; but they are not acting in character with the institutions and genius of England.

“The ground taken by Lord Panmure is so broad, and he so utterly protests against all criticism, that it might seem almost superfluous in his case to answer particular charges or to condescend to details. However, he has not thought it superfluous. No objection, he says, was raised to his late choice, while General Ashburnham remained in this country. It is true. We must confess default. But it is not ours alone. Everybody was asking, ‘Who is General Ashburnham? What has he done?’ There was no one to answer. The single line in the ‘List of Services’ in the *Army List* told very little. It was invidious to say anything against a man of whom nothing was known either for or against him. People did, indeed, ask how it was that when some scores of British officers of sufficient rank had just acquired experience and distinction in a Russian war, they were all passed over for a man whose last services were no more recent than 1846. What General had we got from the Crimea which was to teach us so much and provide us with so many proved soldiers? So it was, however. Lord Panmure did elude criticism for a time by falling back to the ante-Crimean period of our military annals. We had been prepared to defend the claims of General Pennefather, and to this day we see no good reason why he was not appointed. But it was said that his health or strength was no longer equal to the task, and that gave a colour to the new choice. However, by the time General Ashburnham was actually embarking we began to hear from his Indian contemporaries—others than those who have incurred Lord Panmure’s indignation by going into print—the most positive testimony that General Ashburnham, though what is commonly called a good officer, is not a man of that dash, that self-reliance and enterprise, necessary for the leader of a comparatively small force that has to act upon an immense population. These testimonies we thought it better for a time not to publish. When, however, it reached us as a matter of news that at Malta General Ashburnham has been too unwell to attend at a parade given in his honour, the omen—for such we described it—corroborated our previous misgivings, and we expressed ourselves in a way which, as Lord Panmure says, elicited numerous letters on the subject. Though from unexpected quarters, and from men of great authority,

they agreed with what we had heard, and we had no choice but to publish them.

"The Secretary for War is, no doubt, a great authority in military affairs; but, in our humble opinion, he has not quite mastered or accurately remembered the letter he so freely condemns; nor does he state military usage quite as we have been accustomed to hear it stated. His remarks upon the letter of 'M. L.' suppose throughout that General Ashburnham on the occasion described had nothing to set against his orders but the opinions which either he might himself form on the circumstances, or another Brigadier might express to him. Even in such a case circumstances may so evidently have changed or newly shown themselves since the receipt of the original orders as to justify a departure from them, or rather a new interpretation of them; and none have shown how this may be done so much as our greatest Generals, including Wellington himself. In the particular case instanced by Lord Panmure the original order was evidently paradoxical, and therefore emphatically expressed. It ought, therefore, to have been obeyed. But in the present instance there was something more than a question between orders from head-quarters and a private opinion. According to 'M. L.,' whose competency as to facts Lord Panmure does not venture to dispute, there was an actual and evident incompatibility between the orders given to the other Brigadiers and those which General Ashburnham supposed himself to have received. They, having the bulk of the Artillery under their command, were ordered to throw up a battery and open fire at daybreak. They could not do this without possession of the spot which the General alleged he had orders to take no earlier than 4 o'clock, which would not leave time for the construction of the battery. Here, then, was a conflict of orders, and there were several authorities for one construction of them, and General Ashburnham's single one for the other, which certainly had neither reason nor the result on its side. But 'M. L.' further alleges that the Commander-in-Chief expressed great impatience at the delay, and vented his indignation in no measured terms, both in the hearing of the whole Staff, and, it was probable, to General Ashburnham himself. Nor does this rest on his unsupported assertion, or on any private assertion. It came out in the dispatches, in which Sir H. Gough himself says, "It was directed that this (the taking of the Maichan) should be done during the night of the 9th, but the execution of this part of the plan was

deferred, owing to *misconceptions* and casual circumstances, until near daybreak.' Lord Panmure has wholly forgotten this extract as well as all the particular facts of the case. He has confined himself to what we must call a schoolboy's theme on the duty of military subordination, as if there was no such thing as change of circumstances, no such thing as discretion left to Brigadiers or Generals of Division. So soon has Lord Panmure forgotten the tremendous error committed in the late war by a too literal obedience to an order brought with hot haste and written only twenty minutes before, and at the distance of a short mile. Indeed, his Lordship's remarks are so little addressed to the facts of the case that they leave 'M. L.'s' letter just as they found it. We are obliged to him, as also to Lords Clanricade and Grey, for the homilies they have read us on the duties of journalists. This is a point on which long practice has led us to believe ourselves very fairly informed though liable to errors. Should England ever see the day when appointments are invariably made on perfectly public principles, that will probably put an end to criticism more effectually than any of the advice or any one of the authorities arrayed against us last night. But that day is not likely to come while the patron of the immortal 'Dowb' still holds office."

"*Finis Coronat opus.*" The Sequel will show how far the views thus taken by *The Times* and by its correspondents, as regards the merits and qualifications of this *protégé* of the House of Lords were correct. Sons of Noblemen have certain privileges at our Universities which are withheld from commoners, and as long as the Court aided by the Horse Guards and that House is destined to rule paramount these privileges would, no doubt, accompany these noble scions throughout their career, whether civil or military. However feeble the comparative influence of Commoners in their own House of Parliament, still as long as they are allowed to ask questions calculated to open the eyes of the public on matters of this nature we have little to fear from the permanent pre-

dominance of the Upper House. A question of this nature was accordingly put in the House of Commons in the following month of February, by the late Member for Midhurst, Mr. Warren, who asked if it was true that General Ashburnham, having found on reaching China that war had also broken out in India, gave the preference to India and proceeded to Calcutta where he made a tender of his services,—that finding no desire manifested by the Governor-General or the Commander of the forces there to comply with his wishes he returned in dudgeon to England, and if it was true that he had actually arrived without any orders or authority from the Commander-in-Chief and that no notice had been taken of this infraction of the rules of the Service ?

Although these facts were admitted to be substantially correct, as regarded this *filius nobilis*, they were overlooked. Even the Lords who were so indignant on the former occasion remained perfectly silent, no member of that House having thought proper to disturb their tranquility by putting any question on the subject to the noble Lord then at the head of the War Department, who was described in this article by *The Times* as the patron of the “immortal Dowb.” This *denouement* of the affair will however serve to show whether the publications in *The Times* animadverting on this appointment, or the indignation of these noble Lords at such animadversions, were most deserving of reprobation ? As this allusion to the patron of “the immortal Dowb” must have reference to an *exposé* made by Sir De Lacy Evans, in the House of Commons, shortly after his return from the Crimean campaign, it may be necessary, as a farther illustration of the evils of Nepotism, to give some



explanations on this point. It appears that at a critical period of those campaigns, when telegraphic communications were looked to with the greatest anxiety, General Simpson, then in command of the British army in the Crimea, received one from Lord Panmure with the ominous words "Take care of Dowb," which this nominee of that noble Lord not being able to comprehend he referred it to the chiefs of our allies the French and Turks. The French thought it might have reference to General Dowbiosky then commanding the Russian forces, they consequently prepared for some unexpected attack, or flank movement; the following orders were accordingly transmitted through the French lines, "*Prennez garde du General Russe Dowb qui doit mediter quelque manœuvre extraordinaire selon l'avis qu'on vient de recevoir par le ministre de la guerre de S. M. Britannique.*" The Chief of the Mahometan contingent was consulted as to his mode of deciphering this enigmatical despatch. After a lapse of twenty-four hours, during which the allies had been under arms watching in vain with the greatest anxiety for some extraordinary movement, this disciple of Mahomet having conferred with a Bramin, reported that there had been a Shah of the name of Dowb on the throne of Persia who sacked Delhi and massacred its inhabitants during the last century. That as the Russians had been recently co-operating with the Persians it was probable that this Dowb was a descendant of Shah Dowb and might be on his way to aid the Russians—that the Dowbs of the Punjab took their names from this race of Shahs who were concerting with the Russians in the mutiny then projected in India for the subversion of British rule.

Some of the French chaplains, on the other hand, conceived that as the Department of the Dowbs in France was represented by Count Montalembert, who was so strongly opposed to the part taken by his countrymen in aid of Turkish Mahometanism against Christian Russia, he might have profited by this event and concerted some Dowb movement in support of Christianity, and of the claims of the descendants of St. Louis to the throne of their ancestors. These doubts about Dowbs, between the Disciples of Christ and Mahomet, were however happily put an end to by the arrival of a fresh despatch from Scotland in reply to Simpson's enquiries for explanations on this great Dowb question. In this reply Simpson was informed that if he had consulted his book of instructions and private signals he would have found that Dowb meant Dowbiggan, which for private reasons the War Minister did not wish to be publicly known, this Dowbiggan being his nephew. That his object was to obtain a recommendation from Simpson to justify his promotion. This as a matter of course was immediately attended to, and a beardless boy, then a Subaltern, became shortly afterwards a field officer. When this duty was duly executed by General Simpson as the most important at such a crisis of the war, a suitable apology was made to our gallant allies for the twenty-four hours' anxiety and inconvenience resulting from this inattention to private and confidential signals. When the facts of the case, however, became known to the French, their indignation at this system of nepotism and patronage was only equalled by their sympathy for those brave officers and gallant soldiers whose meritorious services were overlooked when unaided by the possession of wealth or

aristocratic connections. (Simpson was promoted and recalled.)

This *exposé* however, by General Evans, did not tend much to his advancement, as he happens to be the only General officer who served in the Crimea who had not been promoted to a higher grade, as he holds the same rank now that he held when he went there, although the only one who was honored in person by the thanks of the House of Commons for his services there. When officers make expositions of public abuses for the good of the service they must be prepared for a sacrifice of personal interests, more particularly when not from "*the north of the Tweed,*" but as in his case from "*the banks of the Shannon.*"

The allusion made by *The Times* in this article, when reminding Lord Panmure of the tremendous error committed in the Crimea by the hasty order transmitted by Lord Raglan which occasioned such an unnecessary sacrifice of life as that which resulted from the charge of the Light Brigade of Cavalry at Balaclava, affords another instance of the evils of a system which leads to selections of men for important commands who are more distinguished for their aristocratic connections than for their military prowess, as few were less fitted for the command of the army there than Lord Raglan, who never served as a regimental officer or commanded a soldier in action until he obtained that command, which was forced upon him as some compensation for the baneful influence which occasioned his removal from the Horse Guards, where he had acted as military secretary for so many years, and for the duties of which, or for the command of the army at home, he was so much

better qualified. The elevation of a barrister to the Wool Sack, or to the chief justiceship of the Queen's bench, who had never had an opportunity of displaying talents or qualifications by holding a brief in an action at common law or in a court of equity, would be looked upon as a preposterous outrage on common sense and public justice ; but exposing thousands of brave men to be sacrificed by placing them under the command of a General who never had an opportunity of displaying his qualifications as a general officer, or in command of a regiment or even a company in action, however unprecedented in other armies and ridiculed by other nations, is looked upon by us as a matter of course, seniority in rank being regarded as conferring superiority of intellect, whereas our rulers should learn that the gifts of nature are as necessary for a general-in-chief, as for a Lord Chancellor, a Chief Justice, or a Poet.—“ *Poeta nascitur non fit* ” being as applicable to one case as the other. An able general for instance never would have overlooked or allowed his chief Engineer to neglect the formation of a road from Balaclava to the trenches by which the lives of so many brave men were sacrificed, nor would he have placed the guns he landed from his fleet in charge of a hand-full of Turks some miles in front of his cavalry and infantry, exposed to be captured, as they subsequently were, on the first attempt made by an enemy for that purpose ; nor would he then have increased the evil by making such an unnecessary sacrifice of life for their recapture under a supposition that the enemy were retiring, when it was manifest to every one else that they had taken up a strong position in which they invited an attack from the allied forces ; nor would an able general

consider it consistent with justice under such an untoward succession of misfortunes to endeavour to throw the blame on the Turks for the loss of these guns, or on the officer commanding the cavalry for a misconception of the orders for their recapture, when those orders were in writing and so positive as not to admit of being misunderstood. These facts were so clearly pointed out at the time in the following letter addressed to the Editor of *The Times*, by Sir John Scott Lillie on the evidence of Lord Raglan's own orders and despatches as to render it impossible to entertain any doubts on the subject :—

## JUSTICE TO THE TURKS AND TO OUR LIGHT CAVALRY.

### TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES.

“ Sir,—Perceiving that the Turkish troops have been severely animadverted on for prematurely abandoning their guns in front of Balaklava on the 25th ult., and even hooted by women in our camp, as cowards, I think it unjust to allow a stigma of this nature to remain on any portion of our allies without offering a few words in their defence. I would therefore ask those who are so ready to condemn on *ex parte* statements if it would have been possible for a few hundred Turks, recently landed in the Crimea, and thus placed in front of our position, and even of our cavalry in charge of guns, without any available support, successfully to resist an attack of 20,000 Russian troops of all arms, or, without horses, to carry off the guns thus placed under their care from redoubts described in the despatches of Lord Raglan and General Canrobert as imperfect and hastily constructed ?

“ As official despatches, Sir, ought to be considered the best evidence before the bar of public opinion in cases of this nature, I may also refer to that of the Russian commander, General Liprandi, who reported that ‘ in the first of these imperfectly constructed redoubts the Turks main-

tained their post until 170 of them were killed.' This does not look much like a premature abandonment or cowardice. Your own correspondent, another eye witness, in his interesting description of the deeds of that day, says that after this overwhelming attack 'the Turks fled in confusion towards the town, firing their muskets at the enemy until they were lapped by the Russian cavalry. Steel flashed in the air, and down go the poor Moslem, quivering on the plain, split through fez and musket-guard to the chin. There was no support for them. It was evident the Russians had been to quick for us.'

"I will now ask, Sir, what would an equal number of British or French troops have done if placed in a similar position? They might have been made prisoners, which must have been the inevitable result had they remained. In that case it is possible their lives might have been spared; but when expecting no quarter from *their inveterate foes* and no support from *their faithful allies*, they had no alternative but that of seeking safety by flight. Are they, then, the only parties to be blamed? Are they to be unjustly assailed by those faithful allies for having been thus exposed as *enfants perdus* to be slaughtered by such overpowering numbers of their inveterate foes?

"The intrinsic value of these guns, Sir, was trifling, compared with the moral effects produced on the respective armies by their capture, and the lamentable consequences resulting from the effort made for their recapture which cannot be better described than in the words of your own correspondent:—'*Don Quixote in his tilt against the wind-mill, was not near so rash and reckless as the gallant fellows who prepared, without a thought, to rush on to almost certain death. It is a maxim of war that cavalry never act without support—that infantry should be close at hand when cavalry carry guns, as the effect is instantaneous; but our heavy cavalry were at a great distance behind, and our infantry and guns far in their rear, and a mile and a half to be charged over before the guns in the enemy's possession could be reached!*'

"These being the facts and usages of war so correctly laid down by your correspondent, let us inquire into the misconception stated to have been the cause of this gallant though untoward encounter. Lord Raglan says in his despatch, 'It appearing that an attempt was making to remove the captured guns, the Earl of Lucan was desired to advance rapidly, follow the enemy in their retreat, and try to prevent their effecting their object.'

"As this order was delivered in writing, no doubt could exist as to its meaning, no discretion could consequently be exercised by Lord Lucan. The only misconception under such circumstances was that of the supposition of the enemy being in full retreat, which was not the fact. The Light Brigade was, nevertheless, ordered to execute this duty, and Lord Lucan says in his report that he supported it with the heavy cavalry, which appears to have been another misconception, according to your correspondent's statement, as well as the report of Lord Raglan, which says that it was 'The Chasseurs d'Afrique that gallantly charged a Russian battery on our left, and thus rendered essential service to the British cavalry.'

"However these mistakes are to be lamented, it is gratifying to reflect that the gallantry of our troops could not have been surpassed. Thus placing guns in an advanced post may have been looked upon as an improvement in modern warfare; but to an old soldier who accompanied the British army from its first landing in Portugal, in 1808, to the conclusion of the war, in 1814, at Toulouse, it appears as novel as it is incomprehensible, as I never witnessed anything of the kind, nor such a sacrifice of cavalry in any of our encounters with the enemy during that period, and I most sincerely hope we shall hear of no more mistakes or misconceptions of this nature.

"I lament, Sir, the necessity of thus giving expression to these sentiments, having a great respect for Lord Raglan; but, as I have a greater respect for the character of the brave troops under his command and for the cause of European civilization and tranquility, now so endangered by the barbarians of the north, I have thought it an act of justice, where so many interests are involved, and even the vitality of the nation is at stake, to give expression to these sentiments, and to endeavour to protect the brave troops thus adverted to from all aspersions or misconceptions connected with the loss of these guns, or the impracticable efforts for their recapture.

"I have the honour to be, Sir,

"Your most obedient servant,

"Brighton, Nov. 18.

"J. S. LILLIE."

The losses thus adverted to, witnessed as they had been by so many officers of foreign nations, friends and foes, were not calculated to increase their respect for the

skill of our Generals or the merits of our administrative system. These losses, however, were trifling in extent compared with the lamentable disasters which resulted from the unpardonable oversight on the part of a Commander-in-chief in not profiting by the ample means at his disposal for the formation of a road from the harbour of Balaclava to the camp, where the troops confided to his care were destined to pass the winter, and where so many innocent victims perished in consequence of this neglect, as adverted to in certain poetic effusions attributed to the author of "the Fallacies of the Faculty," termed "Physic and its Phases," who animadverted on the neglect also shown to the army surgeons in the Crimea :—

"Neglect!—by heavens! they were a sorry crew,  
 Could well forget the deeds such heroes do,  
 The lives they save, the courage men reveal,  
 Who rush on death, confiding in their zeal!  
 Which most a nation's gratitude deserve,  
 Those who in peril's hour show skill and nerve,  
 Or they, the brainless chiefs whose'er they be,  
 That could not make between their camp and sea  
 The two ends of a wretched roadway meet,  
 That starving thousands and their steeds might eat,  
 Though food for both, on Balaclava's shore,  
 Rotted in heaps, within their cannons' roar?"

The author of this production appears to think that the faculties of the advocates of our vicious system in the army are as fallacious as those of the faculty of Medicine. The great evil however to be deplored in the army is that the victims of such a system are the innocent and unoffending. The cottage is sure to suffer for every error of *the Court, the Cabinet, or the Camp*. When



error sits in the seat of power and authority, and is generated in *high places*, it may be compared to that torrent which originates in the mountains but commits its devastation in the vale. Well might *The Times* have said, in the article already adverted to, on the evidence of its own correspondent (an eye-witness):—"That parents, wives, brothers, the whole family, as if they cared no longer for promotion and had forgotten the Horse Guards, urge us to publish and tell the whole truth, and that meanwhile Lord Raglan had scarcely been seen since the battle of Inkermann. There was consequently a general belief that he did not know the state of things, that he felt himself wholly unequal to amend it, and that he accordingly kept out of sight of the ills he could not remove."

When the authors of such calamities were neither censured nor recalled, it could not be a matter of surprise that in process of time a court favorite and a Guardsman should have been placed in command of the army in the Crimea over the head of the veteran, Sir Colin Campbell, who, though of plebeian descent, was not only his superior in army rank but in every other qualification for the duties of such an office, nor that another Court favorite and Guardsman should by similar means have obtained the lucrative appointment of Commander-in-Chief in India to retrieve his losses on the turf at home, the consequences of which might have proved most fatal to our empire there, had it not pleased providence when the mutiny broke out to relieve him from the cares of this world, and had it not pleased *the Court* and Cabinet to be compelled at length to make a virtue of necessity by sending this veteran of plebeian

origin, who had been thus passed over in the Crimea, to succeed this "*filius nobilis*" in the chief command in India.

"These are truths (as observed in the preceding quotation from Junius) that are unquestionable. If they make no impression it is because they are too vulgar and notorious, but when at length the indifference of the people has continued too long they must be roused to a sense of their danger."

That the danger of this country is greater now than at any former period of our history, from the rapidity with which troops can be conveyed to our shores by means of Steam Navigation, and the recent alliance between France and Russia, whose combined fleets would be enabled to effect objects which neither could hope for separately, is a "*great fact*" no longer to be doubted. Amongst a variety of articles and letters in *The Times* and other papers on the present state of affairs, the following extract of a letter from one of the correspondents of that paper (dated June 21, 1859) may serve to throw some additional light on this point, being from a German who appears to have no sympathy with Austrian misrule in Italy, but a strong suspicion, in common with others, on the evidence of equally *strong facts*, that the conquest of England is regarded by Louis Napoleon as part of his destiny:—

"The bulk of the German nation have no sympathy with Austrian rule in Italy; they despise and detest the system of priesthood and Jesuitism which governs the Court of Vienna; they have no animosity towards the French nation, with whom they wish to remain on a friendly footing, as the only means of promoting their mutual welfare. They have, however, not the slightest confidence in the sayings and

proclamations of the French Emperor. They are of opinion that the ulterior aim of all Napoleon's plans is to subdue England ; and, indeed, that Sovereign did pronounce before he became the President of the Republic,—‘ If ever I get into power, I shall do with regard to England what my uncle did not succeed in doing.’ M. Louis Blanc will, I am sure, bear testimony to these words, for he was present when they were spoken. And is not almost every step taken by Louis Napoleon a proof of such designs against England ? Is it not an insult to England to see ‘ her faithful ally ’ conclude an alliance *without her knowledge* with their late mutual enemy ? The propositions made by the late Czar Nicholas to Sir Hamilton Seymour have come into play again, and France is more docile and obliging than honest and stubborn England. Negotiations with a view of obtaining that alliance were actually carried on between Paris and St. Petersburg *before the Crimean war was terminated*. The Saxon Minister at Paris, Baron Seebach, Son-in-law to Count Nesselrode, if he were but candid would be able to give some very interesting information on that point.

“ The manner in which Louis Napoleon, after the disgraceful attempt of Orsini, demanded an alteration in the law of England has not been forgotten in Germany, and Lord Palmerston's behaviour on that occasion created in this country as unmistakeable indignation as it did in England. The *Charles et Georges* affair was another downright insult to England. It was, moreover, by French and Russian influence that, in entire contradiction to the stipulations of the Peace at Paris, one Hospodar was elected for the two Danubian Principalities. It was French and Russian diplomacy and money that supported the bandit chief Danielo of Montenegro against the ‘ sick man ’ at Constantinople. Russian agents have been busy among the population of the Ionian Islands, and why should not Louis Napoleon, in his capacity of liberator of mankind, think it right to liberate those people from the yoke of their foreign invaders ? Russian intrigues, moreover, have always been at work in India. And what is the reason of the Russian Baltic fleet cruising about in the Mediterranean after having obtained by purchase the seaport town of Villafranca ? Is it to support the French fleet against the Austrians, who have no maritime power worth talking of ? What is the reason of the enormous augmentation of the French fleet ? And is *Cherbourg meant against Austria* ?

“ Napoleon I. said at St. Helena, on the 12th of June, 1816, ‘ We

must fight again for the free navigation of the seas ;' and Louis Napoleon's confidential friend, M. Emile Girardin, says, in his pamphlet *La Guerre*, 'An alliance between Russia and France might at present be easily obtained on the simple principle of letting France have the Rhine and Russia part of the Mediterranean.' And, again, 'there is a balance of power on shore, and a balance of power at sea must be established,' &c.

"These are the reflections, Sir, that occupy the minds of the German people, and that lead them to the following calculations :—

"The ulterior aim of France and Russia is to injure England as much as possible. They cannot gain that point as long as Germany is powerful. When they succeed in subduing Austria they will turn against Prussia, which is not strong enough by itself to withstand a simultaneous aggression from west and east, being at the same time exposed to attacks by the French and Russian fleets. In the meantime the 'sick man' will have died, and Constantinople will be occupied by the Muscovites. Will England be able to drive them away from there, supported, as they will be, by the French? Will England be able to maintain the overland route to India? I say, *No*.

"Russia, however, cannot carry out her Oriental machinations as long as Austria is strong. That is one reason of her hatred towards the latter country; whilst another reason is the support Austria gave to the Allies during the Crimean war, in placing large armies on the western frontier of Russia, thereby preventing her from sending more troops to the theatre of war.

"The present war in Italy is the prelude to a war against Germany and England. These countries cannot be crushed at once, but they must succumb at last, if they do not combine in time. The whole of Europe, including Russia, took more than 20 years to reduce Napoleon I.; what will be the chances of Napoleon III., at the head of a splendid army, supported by a magnificent fleet, and allied with the Empire of Russia?

"Let England and Germany then, for the sake of their own existence and of a speedy return of peace, be again united, as they have always been—and theirs was surely no mock alliance. Let them draw their swords again, and there will soon be re-established a real balance of power, which will not be wantonly disturbed by Zouaves or by Cossacks."

The sentiments thus adverted to as having been expressed by Louis Napoleon in presence of Louis Blanc, as to his intention, "if ever he got into power, to do with regard to England what his uncle did not succeed in doing" can only be regarded as a confirmation of the part he considers himself destined to perform on the stage of this life, as publicly declared by himself before the Chamber of Peers in Paris, on his trial in 1840, for high treason, in consequence of his fruitless attempt at Boulogne, and his vain endeavours to make the tame eagle he brought from England fly "*de la haute ville de clocher en clocher aux tours de Nôtre Dame.*" In his defence on that occasion he flattered the vanity of the French people by the declaration that he represented *a principle—a cause—a defeat*. The principle was the Sovereignty of the people—the cause, that of the Empire—the defeat, Waterloo. The principle, he informed them, they had recognized—the cause they had served, and the defeat they wished to avenge. "No;" said he, "there is no difference between you and me, and I will not believe that I can be destined to bear the penalty of the defection of others." Even the supporters of the Bourbons felt greater pride in exhibiting their nationality as Frenchmen on that occasion than in manifesting their attachment to the claimants of a royal race that they could neither regard with sentiments of admiration or respect. If such were the sentiments of the Bourbon advocates of that day, when they were vested with power, it need not be a matter of surprise that their admiration of imperial successes in Italy should beget a community of feeling with the present Emperor as regards that portion of his destiny which related to the conquest

of England, which, amongst a variety of other channels, was adverted to in a letter of *The Times* correspondent from Marseilles, dated June 25th, wherein he observes "that such was the enthusiasm even among the Bourbon advocates at the recent successes of the Emperor, that were he to declare war against England to-morrow he would have the cordial support of the nation with but numerically insignificant exceptions."

The allusion made in this letter to the alliance between France and Russia having had its origin during the war in the Crimea is a fact equally well known. That war having been occasioned by the wounded pride of the French Emperor at having been designated a *parvenu* and not recognised as a brother Emperor by Nicholas, who maintained the rights of the Bourbons and a respect for the treaty of Vienna, by which the family of Napoleon was for ever precluded from the throne of France. On the death of Nicholas these points were ceded by Alexander to Napoleon, and the speedy and premature termination of that war thus accounted for, to which England was compelled to accede. The foundation of the French, Russian, and Sardinian alliance was then laid. Hence the cession to Russia of the port of Villafranca by Sardinia as a harbour and dock-yard for a Russian fleet in the Mediterranean, to co-operate with that at Cherbourg, Brest, Toulon, &c. for the subjugation of England, and the restoration of that continental system which the first Napoleon deemed so essential to that end, and which his nephew has openly and so frequently declared it to be part of his destiny to carry into effect.

When it is well known that notwithstanding the present war in Italy, naval armaments are proceeding

with great rapidity at these ports, and that the Queen of Spain has been induced to join in this undertaking, and is now co-operating with naval armaments ordered in England, under the promise of French aid, for the recapture of Gibraltar—and of having a portion of Portugal added to her dominions, as originally projected by the 1st Napoleon when he contemplated placing his brother Joseph on the Spanish throne. When these facts are notorious, and that a pretext for hostilities with Portugal, as an ancient ally of England, was so wantonly sought for in the affair of the "*Charles et Georges*," it became a question how far it was prudent on the part of the government of Lord Derby to recommend that ancient ally to perform the part of the lamb in the fable, on that occasion, while the Emperor of the French was performing that of the wolf? Or whether that would not have been the proper time to ask for explanation as to the real object of these preparations for naval warfare when the contemplated war in Italy was against a power having no fleet to contend with? and whether a decisive step of this nature would not have tended more to preserve the peace of Europe than waiting until the different continental powers about to be encountered were subjugated in detail, and a reputation acquired by the Emperor and armies of France, and the alliances resulting therefrom which would render it more difficult for England and her cousin Germans in Germany, Belgium, and Portugal to preserve their present possessions in undisturbed tranquility? War makes soldiers and efficient officers, and when the troops of one of the contending armies are led by Generals selected for their merit, as in the case of France, and of the other for their aristocratic connections,

as in the case of Austria, the result cannot be doubtful, even with a superiority of physical force and animal courage on the part of the soldiers. Austria does not want men of merit or ability for command, but, as in England, the doors to advancement are closed against them. The *Saturday Review* of the 4th of June, (no mean authority on questions of this nature) tells us—"That the greatest General known to exist is General Georgy, who is now living without prospect of employment, in obscurity and forgotten, in a remote corner of the Austrian dominions—That he rose in two years from the rank of subaltern to the chief command of an army, which he led to victory after victory in triumphant succession; but that it is scarcely probable that the pride of the military hierarchy would now submit to his command.—That if the Emperor of Austria were a great man he would probably recognize a kindred genius, and in the balance of soldierly qualities, the presence of the real commander in either army would decide the fortune of the war."

But as Moliere said of the faculty of medicine, "that they considered it better that a thousand lives should be lost according to their prescribed rules, than that one should be saved by any other means;" and in this opinion it appears this Emperor most cordially concurs. These opinions of the *Saturday Review* appear to be pretty generally entertained, if we may judge from the following extracts from the editorial articles of *The Times* of the 4th of July:—

"We follow with an interest much more intimate and earnest than could be excited by a sympathy for any mere principle the tactics and the defeats of those Austrian armies. It is vain to disguise from ourselves



the fact that what they are we are. The solidity, the bravery, the old fashioned routine, all of which yield so sulkily before the science and intelligence of an army led and organized by men in their active vigour are like our own solidity, our own bravery, and our own routine. So far as we are in advance of this Austrian army, which loses town after town and district after district, and has the secret of suffering the most irreproachable defeats, is due not to our dear old reverend doting Horse Guards system,

‘————— Quod res omnes timide gelidèque ministrat ;  
Dilator, spe longus, iners, avidusque futuri,  
Difficilis, querulus, laudator temporis acti,’

but to the House of Commons, the press, and the people. How coldly would the representatives of this good old system have laughed down the idea of reconnoitring by balloons ! How complete, but a short time since, was their contempt for the Minié rifle ! How arduously were they driven into an attempt to improve the immovable old field-piece, declaring with a sneer to every one who would listen that they went into this nonsense only to gratify the gaping vulgar, and that weapons such as those which were whisked up to the heights of Solferino, and which plowed up the reserves in the valleys below, were the mere toys of civilians and amateurs, and unworthy of the notice of veteran soldiers. Yet upon the very first collision of armies Victory declared herself for the best arms. The Minié rifle preserved India to England, the rifled cannon won Montebello and Magenta for the French ; and to the same arm, combined with that much ridiculed balloon reconnaissance, the French owe it that Solferino was a French victory and that Napoleon III. is now before Verona. The lesson to us is all-important. If we would hold our position among first-rate Powers and would dwell in peaceful homes, we must have men at our Horse Guards who are not too conceited or too old to advance with the age in which they live.”

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“ Five years ago we were informed, on the very highest authority, that the Constitution of England was on its trial. War had come, and, as the wont of war is, had tested everything, and found many things wanting. Our military organization, dependent on the traditions of the Peninsula, had crumbled away into a hideous ruin of blundering incapacity

and superannuated tradition. Strategy was unknown, the commanders of our fleets did very little to remind us of the days of Nelson, our diplomats blundered, and our departments did their best to shuffle their responsibilities from one to the other. Certainly the British Constitution was on its trial, and so was the temper of the nation. However, we worked through the difficulty after our own blundering insular manner; some things we left as they were, some things we altered without amending; some things we actually did correct, a few men we punished, and many we rewarded. We whitewashed our Generals, expelled our Ministers, and compensated ourselves for having starved our army during one year by gorging it to repletion the next. These things we did, but whatever else we lost we never were for a moment in danger of losing the British Constitution. It bore this trial as it has borne so many others, and came out of it in no degree perceptibly the worse.

“Possibly, when the Prince Consort was giving utterance to his apprehension as to the durability of our institutions, he had in his mind another model formed on far different principles, and supposed to enjoy more of his sympathies. Unencumbered by the ponderous machinery of a Parliament, delivered from the perpetual blister of a free press, with counsels silent as the grave, with subjects drilled to passive submission, and troops trained to the precision of automata. Austria presented in every respect a shining contrast to noisy, turbulent, democratic England. If considerations of a high and sublime policy, unfathomable by vulgar minds, had not withheld her from participation in the Crimean War, how marvellous would have been the example which we should have derived from the land of Metternich and Schwartzenberg; how soon should we have been driven to admit the superiority of the paternal over the popular, of the orderly over the progressive element. Such we may imagine to have been the speculations which passed through the mind of the Prince Consort when he weighed our institutions in the balance, and only did not find them wanting.

“Well, the wheel of fortune has revolved and it is the turn of England to be neutral, while Austria, in her turn, has to undergo the fiery ordeal of war. We will not speak at length of the manner in which her military system has encountered the shock, and how infinitely inferior to their reputation have proved all the apparatus

and appliances of war with which she has surrounded herself. Her troops have shown a stubborn and manly courage, but they are evidently wanting in individual intelligence, and, as they are only fighting for His Imperial Royal Apostolic Majesty, and not at all for themselves, or anything that concerns their own vulgar existence or happiness, they display an entire want of dash or enthusiasm. Battle after battle they fight and they lose with a mechanical perseverance which might deserve our admiration if it did not appeal so strongly to our pity. It has been the policy of Austria to make her subjects into one nation, and that policy has been illustrated by the fact that her Italian Regiments, on whom she has strangely relied to assist her in keeping down her Italian subjects, desert her by fifties at a time, and that her soldiers, when prisoners of war in the hands of the French, can scarcely be prevented from flying at each other's throats. Her tactics turn out to be old-fashioned and obsolete, and the Monarchy which has devoted itself more than any other to the developement of its military system finds its clumsy manœuvres quite unable to encounter its active and enterprising enemy. The Generals of Austria have shown a wonderful deficiency of intelligence. The victory of Magenta was their own, could they only have prevailed on themselves to bring up the fresh troops who were ready to win it, and the bloody day of Solferino might have had a different ending if the Emperor had not retained two corps of his army at Mantua, for fear the place should be surprised by the army of Prince Napoleon, which was at that time reposing in the pastoral realms of Parma.

"For military affairs paternal government seems to answer no better than limited monarchy. Let us see if it is more successful in civil administration. Of course, things will go wrong under the very best Governments and institutions; but what is peculiar to Austria is that to her Government and institutions her misfortunes are directly traceable. If her Generals have been inefficient she has the consolation of knowing that they are all men of the very best family, and if she has lost the counsels of Hess, the chief of the Staff of Marshal Radetzky, it is because the ancestors of Hess have not hitherto been considered sufficiently illustrious to permit the State to enjoy the full benefit of his talents. But surely Vienna, the chosen seat of Imperial Royal Apostolic Majesty, is one sound spot amid so much that is rotten, an oasis in the desert of this paternal *régime*. Who can doubt it? Has not Vienna offered to place its garrison at the disposal of the Emperor by

manning its walls with its own Burgher Guard ? The offer is patriotic, but the Minister of the Interior has refused it, because he feels that without the protection of a regularly disciplined military force his own official and perhaps corporeal existence would not be safe. Vienna has no free press to expose the blunders of her War-Office, but her Ministers dare no more strip themselves of a guard than the tyrant of some ancient Greek city. The Tyrolese are supposed still to stand firm and to be prepared to shed their blood in defence of their homes and their mountains ; but their feeling is rather national than loyal, and if they fight under the standard of their Emperor it is with the express mental reservation that they will not lay down those arms which they wield against the public enemy until they have extorted from their domestic foes, the Emperor and his Council, a full redress of their grievances and oppressions. When this is the attitude assumed by the loyal inhabitants of Tyrol it may easily be guessed what are the feelings of the Hungarians. The kingdom is lost to the Empire, we are informed, unless a complete change of system takes place, and of that change of system there is as yet no appearance.

“ It is probable that the young Emperor of Austria has learnt during the last two months more truth than in all the previous part of his reign. That truth is everywhere the same. If his army be ill-commanded and his troops ill-fed, it is the system. If his capital be only kept in subjection by armed force, it is because the system has driven it to desperation. If his provinces are rebellious and his exchequer empty, the system has goaded the one to resistance and drained the other to the last florin. The vain dream of suppressing human thought and the intercourse of mind with mind in the midst of an inquiring age ; the miserable idea of making a civil despotism more tolerable by allying it with ecclesiastical tyranny ; the pride that does not disdain bankruptcy ; and the obstinacy which seems ever in search of fresh misfortunes,—these, and such qualities as these, have been the admiration of the worshippers of brute strength, and the despisers of all in the nature of man that elevates him above the beasts that perish. The system has been fairly tried, and its strength has turned out to be weakness, its union discord and its piety hypocrisy. The paternal system has been, like the British Constitution, put upon its trial, but, unlike the British Constitution, has been weighed in the balance and found wanting.

If we are to infer from these observations that the armies of England and those of Austria having been engaged in sanguinary warfare since the declaration, from the highest authority thus referred to, as to the British constitution being on its trial, and that notwithstanding "*our Military organisation having crumbled into a hideous ruin of blundering incapacity since the traditions of the Peninsular war,*" it is consoling to see that the satisfactory termination of our war with Russia was not due, as stated by *The Times*, "to our dear old reverend doting Horse Guard system" in which the influence of that highest authority was supposed to preponderate during that war, but to "*the House of Commons—the press—and the people.*" Whereas under the government of Austria (which interdicts these elements of constitutional freedom) the result of this war in Italy was any thing but satisfactory, notwithstanding that her troops "had shown a stubborn and manly courage. Battle after battle they fought and lost with a mechanical perseverance which might deserve our admiration if it did not appeal so strongly to our pity. Their generals have shown a wonderful deficiency of intellect. They have nevertheless the consolation of knowing that they are all men of the very best family, and if they had lost the counsels of Hess, it was because the ancestors of Hess have not hitherto been considered sufficiently illustrious to permit the state to enjoy the full benefits of his talents." "This lesson" (as *The Times* observes) "should be all important to us. If we would hold our own position among first-rate powers and would dwell in peaceful homes, we must have men at our Horse Guards who are not

too conceited to advance with the age in which we live."

When in addition to this we are reminded by that veteran Statesman in the House of Lords, Lord Lyndhurst, the Nestor of that House, that steam has converted the channel which separates us from France into a river and thrown a bridge across it, we should lose no time in rendering our land forces as efficient as possible, for as his Lordship justly observed, "a mighty army could be brought by railway to the French ports—embarked with the greatest facility, and thrown upon our shores." When all the noble Lords who addressed the House on that and a previous occasion, during the present session, concurred in these views, and urged on the government the necessity of precautions against the ambition of the French Emperor, and the warlike passions of the people he governs, whose feelings of hostility to this country have been so greatly augmented of late, and when it is a generally admitted fact that steam has done away with our maritime superiority,—any inattention on the part of our rulers to the dangers with which we are threatened would be unpardonable. "The question of expense," (as observed by Lord Lyndhurst,) "would sink into insignificance before the importance of the interests at stake. The expense being a premium, and a very moderate one, to be paid for the insurance of the country."

As many of the inhabitants of these islands ridicule the apprehension of these statesmen, as well as the apprehensions of the organs of the public press herein referred to, as regards the dangers to which we are exposed, it may be desirable, before concluding this selection of

extracts, to remind our over confiding gentlemen, that these apprehensions have not been confined to civilians, but that they have been entertained by the Duke of Wellington, the greatest military authority of our time, who communicated his ideas on the subject to Sir John Burgoyne, the Inspector General of Fortifications, the year preceding his death, in a letter which obtained publicity, and was the cause of considerable alarm at that time. Sir John himself has just published a work containing his own opinions on this subject, which may be deemed also deserving of consideration when it is recollected that he is one of the few remaining veterans who served against the armies of the 1st Napoleon, not only in Egypt but throughout the Peninsula war. He cannot therefore be regarded as a mean authority regarding the views of the French Emperor in following those of his uncle.

“There are several fallacies” (he observes in this work) “connected with the capability of this country for defence against a powerful invasion that lead us to a false sense of security—one is, that we have hundreds of thousands of brave spirits ready to rush to arms and drive the rash intruders into the sea. Another fallacy is, that England with its enclosures and hedge fences is particularly favorable for the desultory warfare of an armed population.—Fallacies the more dangerous because based on undeniable facts from which the most erroneous conclusions have been deduced. None can possibly doubt the indignation with which the population of this country would be impressed at any attack on its territory, every cause of internal differences would cease, and the most thorough unanimity prevail. You have, it is true,

the raw material in abundance and of the finest quality, but, alas! how different from the manufactured article, when opposed to soldiers put together with all the artistic combination and refinement of a regiment or an army. You might as well present a great cotton-spinner with some tons of iron, of however superior quality, and tell him that there is his steam engine to enable him to compete with the foreign manufacturer, as to bring masses of men in this state to oppose a regular army. It is quite a delusion to suppose that the character of the general face of this country affords peculiar facilities for defence and harrassing an enemy by an armed population of irregulars. The roads are abundant and good, so that combined movements may be regulated in a variety of ways. The hedge rows, from which so much advantage is expected for defence, afford no real obstacle, but would, on the contrary, act as screens to movements most favorable to well organized armies, as the columns of an enemy would be brought to bear on the direction their general thought most desirable, and would penetrate with the greatest ease these scattered lines of irregular troops."

This additional evidence as to the present perilous position of this country might be of little avail with the great majority of its inhabitants, if unconnected with the all important fact of the naval armaments of France being continued with increased activity at Toulon, Brest, and Cherbourg, notwithstanding the war in Italy. As neither Austria nor any of the German States who might have co-operated with Austria have any naval forces to contend with, England is therefore the only country for which such naval armaments could have been intended.



Whatever friendly and pacific assurances our ministers may receive from the present ruler of France, and however favorably disposed these ministers may be to put the best construction on such assurances, history tells us that there is an hereditary disposition on the part of the rulers of France for a naval superiority over this country. This was exposed, for instance, by Burke, in reply to a speech made by Pitt, in favor of a commercial treaty with France, when Burke ridiculed that minister's contracted views on this subject, as well as his forgetfulness of British interests. "You seem" (said he) "to consider it a contention between the sign of the Fleur de Lys and the British Lion as to which should obtain the best custom, you have depicted in the most glowing colors of romance the love borne by France towards this country,—nay, in order to win upon our passions at the expense of our reason, she has been personified decked out in all her lilies and endued with a heart incapable of infidelity, and a tongue that seems only at a loss to convey the artless language of that heart,—she desires nothing more than to be on the most friendly terms with us—she has even stretched forth her arms to embrace us—nay, more, she stretched them through the sea, witness Cherbourg! Curiosity may be indulged without danger in surveying the Pyramids of Egypt, those monuments of human power for no human purpose. Would I could say the same of Cherbourg. We gaze at the works now carrying on in that harbour like the silly Trojans who gazed at the wooden horse whose bowels teemed with their destruction"!—Had Burke been alive when our present Queen was induced to accept the invitation of the French Emperor to visit

with her hundred senators the completion of that glorious undertaking, he might have repeated the same language to the Prime Minister who advised her Majesty to accept of that invitation, which was a matter of as much surprise to the peaceably disposed inhabitants of France, as of gratification to those who looked forward to the object contemplated by that undertaking. Well might the former have exclaimed

“Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.”

When we have the words of Burke as to this fortress, like the wooden horse of Troy, teeming with elements for our destruction, and the declaration of the French Emperor as to its being his destiny, to accomplish that object, it only remains for us “to put our house in order,” and to express a hope that the House of Commons will, before it adjourns, take the necessary steps for removing such obstructions as may have heretofore impeded our Secretaries of State for War in the selection of competent officers for important commands, and in the exercise of all other duties connected with the efficiency of the army. The Augean stable must be cleared of all impurities, of all undue influence by irresponsible parties, until at all events the result of this threatened descent upon our shores shall have been ascertained.

The following article from *The Times* on the recent appointment of Mr. Sidney Herbert to the head of the war department, will show the arduous task imposed upon that Minister if he is determined to do his duty to the nation—to crush that undue influence or suffer any *imperium in imperio* to militate against the efficiency of the army at such an important crisis of the destinies of this country as the present :—

" Among the changes which the vote of the 11th of June has brought about is that which places Mr. Sidney Herbert at the War-office. Perhaps the hope inspired by his recent devotion to one branch of military knowledge may not ripen into accomplishment. The opposing difficulties are scarcely to be overcome; the causeways and avenues and great thoroughfares of that labyrinth are blocked up with impediments; the *genii loci* have been preached against, prayed against, convicted of all manner of evil doings, and solemnly exorcised, but have never yet been evicted; old abuses, sacred for their historic dust, and formidable for their *vis inertiae*, lie about, and mysterious mumblings warn the rash reformer against the evils of change. It is but too probable that Mr. Sidney Herbert will recoil before the inconvenience of thinking for himself upon so large and onerous a matter, and will trust to time and future opportunity to enable him to modify what he cannot help seeing is radically wrong. However, it is well to take him before he becomes quite hardened, and to whisper a word to him while his impressions as to his new duties may be moderately flexible. The sum of our advice to him would be to use his eyes before he surrenders his ear; to look abroad over Europe before he gives himself up to his military Mentors.

" If it be wise to profit by the example of an enemy, it would be unpardonable to neglect the lesson that may be gained from the experience of a friend. Our new War Minister does not require to be enlightened as to the capacity of the English machinery which he is now about to superintend. He knows what it could do, and what it has shown itself incapable of doing. The system, costly as it is, and curiously perfect as are its checks and counter-checks, has been proved to be unable to supply an army of 30,000 men when pushed seven miles into an enemy's country. It remains pretty much at the present day what it was five years ago; and in the recent expedition to China it was quite understood that General Straubenzee could not have marched his 5,000 men ten miles from the ships without the certainty of losing half of them by starvation and exposure. Now, let us see what the French have done in this Sardinian campaign. It is not yet two months since the Emperor Napoleon was, as he says, taken entirely aback by the suddenly offensive act of Austria. That he was slowly and leisurely preparing for war the world will still believe, but he certainly had no expectation that it would be forced upon him at the

moment when he was called upon to meet it. So, however, it happened; and from noting what was done by France, thus taken at a disadvantage, we may gauge the resources of her military organization. In less than eight weeks France has embarked or passed over the Alps an army of 150,000 men, and has placed that army in perfect equipment and thoroughly supplied in a foreign friendly country. They are not, as the Republican soldiers of 1796 were, without shoes or clothes or food, and hurrying to fight for all the necessities of a campaign. They are in the position of liberators among a people who welcome them as guests. They pass through corn fields which they must not reap, and through towns where they may not levy contributions; foraging is a deadly crime, and the rules of military discipline as respected as the ordinary civil laws of property. These conditions require a tremendous commissariat to test it in all its details; yet we have seen it produce results as perfect as Mr. Herbert could see to-morrow at Woolwich or at Knightsbridge. There has been no suggestion either from friend or foe that those 150,000 men have yet suffered either in health or in comfort, that they have ever been in want of their usual rations, or that they have ever been delayed by the absence of the necessary munitions of war. Orderly and regularly, in one continuous and unbroken stream, in less than a month from the day when the necessity became known, men and arms, clothing and food, a great army and all that was necessary for the subsistence and military efficiency of that army, went forth from the ports of France and took their prepared positions in and about Genoa. The men were moved up to the ground the army was to occupy as they arrived, the articles for their present use and consumption accompanied them, the stores were warehoused in a great depôt, and they pass on to the front as they are required. We have never yet heard of transports fouling each other in the crowded harbour; eye-witnesses do not tell us of guns immovably imbedded in the sand, or uselessly cumbering the quays, nor of ships kept waiting for weeks with their holds crammed with articles anxiously desired but so little suspected of being at hand that steamers are despatched to great distances to obtain a supply. We hear of no strangely contrasted instances of prodigality and parsimony—prodigality which loads the soldier with that he does not want, and parsimony which denies him what is necessary to sustain his life. So far as this debarcation and this depôt have been described in our

letters, they are in all respects the very opposite of Balaklava, and that there is truth in these descriptions is evident from the absence of those terrible returns which came to us from the Crimea, when regiments of 600 men could parade only 25 bayonets, and when the most daring imagination could not have suggested to our General to telegraph, as the French Emperor has just telegraphed, that the *physique* and *morale* of his army were both all that he could wish. This has just been accomplished before all our eyes ; Mr. Herbert cannot but consider within himself that there must be somewhere in existence a system that can produce such good results, and cannot but understand that it is a very different system from that he sees creaking on about him. Could our Horse Guards or our reformed War Department by any effort do for a single corps, if it were sent to Lundy Island, what France, with not superior resources, has already done for this immense army ?

“ But, as curious and interested lookers-on, we may learn from this war some lessons not only in supplying, but also in fighting, an army. It used to be a favourite theme for school-boy discussion whether the Greek phalanx or the Roman legion was the superior when both were perfect of their kind. Here we have much the same question brought practically to issue. The Austrians are, upon the whole, better drilled soldiers than the English. We emulate them in their mechanical precision, but we do not equal them. The accuracy of the evolutions of an Austrian body of troops is perfect ; an English corps is by no means so smoothly working a mechanism. On the other hand, any one who has seen a body of French troops upon the march must have remarked two things—first, how fast they go, and how, without any apparent effort, they get over the ground ; and, secondly, how loose and irregular they are in their drill. It is the old story,—it is the light legion against the heavy phalanx.—The Austrians are strong men, stronger upon an average than the French, good marksmen, not wanting in courage, steady under fire, and inspired by a high feeling of military honour ; but they have never yet been able to stand before their French opponents. Intelligence and celerity have signally beaten pertinacity and solidity. Dash has routed mere lifeless discipline. The Austrian has been out-manceuvred, out-flanked, pursued, overtaken, pushed so closely that he could not destroy his bridges or consolidate his positions, and, although always courageously fighting, has been always beaten. These are the facts—facts which even a

victory on the Mincio could not change, but which the movements concentrated upon the East of Lombardy seem rather calculated to confirm.

"We do not pretend to reproach the Austrians with a peculiarity which circumstances seem to prove to be an element of inferiority. The Germans are naturally a slow people. The accurate and pedantic school martinets sprang from Prussian soil, and the discipline that is there in favour is probably that best adapted to the genius of the people. That it does not answer, however, against the *élan* of the French seems to be now over again in course of being proved. Surely this is a fact that should commend itself to the consideration of our authorities. The Anglo-Norman is a very different man from the German proper. If the French, influenced by their mixture of southern blood, are less patient and more impulsive than the Germans, we also are of that mixed descent which gives us activity and intelligence, and the events now occurring in the plains of Lombardy may afford a fair opportunity for discussing whether we are right in forming our army entirely on the German model. Neither these events nor others a thousand times more decisive could be expected to attract the attention of the Aibreys and Gordons and the other heroes who came decorated from the Chelsea Inquiry, and who still rule at the Horse Guards, but we may commend them to the notice of the new Minister for War, and may draw from them an inference for our own edification."

When we find able articles in the July numbers of the *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh Reviews* reiterating the dangers of our present position, and subsequent letters from the correspondents of the different London papers representing the fact, "*that naval preparations were never more actively carried on at the different French ports than at the present moment,*" what reliance can be placed on the announcement in the *Moniteur* of the intention of the Emperor to put the French army and navy on a peace footing? The following extract from the leading article of the *Economist*, of the 30th of that month, is so replete with indisputable facts that we

cannot do better than conclude for the present with its insertion accompanied by a letter from the Rector of St. Stephen's, Walbrook :—

“There has been lately so strange and perilous a mingling in the public temper of silly panic with silly provocation; so unworthy a tendency in influential quarters to blink certain notorious but uncomfortable facts, and to place futile reliance on certain other facts equally notorious but quite inapplicable; and, worse than all, there has been so strong an inclination to calm men's minds here, and to impose upon men's minds abroad, by statements of our position and resources which, if literally true, are yet in spirit utterly false and misleading, and which deceive the English people (who ought to be enlightened) while failing to deceive our rivals and ill-wishers on the Continent (whom it might be important to blind if it were possible)—that we shall be doing good service by laying before our readers, or rather recalling to their minds, in dry and uncoloured language, a few simple facts which are disputed by none who are in a position to form an opinion as to their accuracy, which there can be no rational offence in stating, and which ought to be stated and engraved on the mind of every Englishman, at the cost, if necessary, of any amount of offence to any number of enemies.

“1. When France maintains a vast army, she may assign reasons plausible enough, and not necessarily menacing or offensive, for doing so. She is a Continental Power; she has a large frontier to watch and defend; she is face to face with other Continental Powers, who, like her, have on foot or in reserve 500,000 troops; and she has a restless and partially discontented population to overawe and keep down. But when she insists upon maintaining a vast navy, she can do so only for purposes of aggression or intimidation, actual or potential. If she has augmented her naval strength till it is equal to that of England, it may not be because she designs to attack England, but it must be because she is resolved to preponderate England. England's navy is to England what France's army is to France—her specific and natural defence. England relying on her naval defences, maintains the smallest of armies. If she were to raise her army to 500,000 men, France would be uneasy, and would be entitled to draw evil auguries, and to demand explicit explanation. France *needs* no large navy. She has not, like us, two Indian

Colonies, an Australian one, and an American one to watch and guard. She has not, like us, Colonies at the Antipodes and in every quarter of the globe. She has very few beyond the Mediterranean, very few more than twenty-four hours from the coast of the mother country. More than half our fleet always is, and always must be, stationed in distant quarters, and wholly unavailable for home protection or for European action. *If the French fleet is equal to ours, therefore, it is double ours.* Now it cannot be double ours without menace and without danger. The moment the French navy is as strong as ours in the aggregate, it is stronger than ours in the Channel and in the Mediterranean. The naval strength of France is always concentrated; ours must be always scattered. With her, naval equality is naval superiority in the ratio of two to one: and such superiority is supremacy. This is the first fact which no one can dispute, and which we must not allow any dust thrown in our eyes by an array of figures for one instant to obscure.

"2. Now, the naval strength of France is at this moment equal and somewhat more than equal to ours. This is the second fact which no one can dispute. She has been augmenting and perfecting her navy for twelve years steadily, and for four years most rapidly, skilfully, and successfully. We know on the best authority, that of our own Admiralty, that her fleet is *at least* (to keep quite within the truth) equal to ours in efficient number, tonnage, and guns,—and is superior to ours in the actual supply and available reserve of trained seamen. Let our readers observe the precise words we use, for every word is measured, and is authentic. Now, we do not say, and we do not think, that the French Government has brought about this state of things with the direct design of attacking us: but it certainly has brought it about in order *to be able* to neutralise our action, to overawe us, to have the command of us in case of a rupture, *to be in a position* to attack us and invade us in case it should seem needful or desirable to do so. We believe that France has no intention just now of invading us: the fact we are concerned with is that she has qualified herself to invade us if she wishes. We confidently state, without fear of denial from any well-informed authority, that at this moment, France could send to all our foreign stations ships of war enough to detain every British vessel there at their respective ports, and yet retain enough at home to have the preponderance both in the Channel and in the Mediterranean. Why should we not state this?



The French know it already : it is essential that the English should know it too.

“ Many persons quiet their own apprehensions, and think themselves justified in ridiculing the warnings of others, by the recollection that the *resources* of this country in wealth, science, mechanism, and seamen are vast, unequalled, and almost unlimited. They are so. No country can rival us in these *potential* means of safety and of strength. Taxes to the amount of seventy millions scarcely burden us. A loan to the amount of a hundred millions would scarcely embarrass us. Our seafaring population is probably threefold that of France. Our engineers and our workmen are the most skilful, and our workshops the most numerous and the best fitted in the world. We could, *if we set about it*, turn out Minié rifles and Armstrong guns—and perhaps frigates and floating batteries—more profusely and possibly more rapidly than any other nation, or than all other nations put together. But what are all these boundless possibilities if we do not utilise them, and utilise them in time ? What are all these resources if they are not available ? What, but a cellar full of ingots when our need is of coined gold ? What, but the reversion of a magnificent estate to a man whose life and liberty are jeopardised for the want of a little ready money ? Let us bear in mind that property which we have not means of defending, resources which we cannot at once call into activity, belong not to us but to our assailants. *Reserved* forces, such as ours, are only eventual capabilities, not active and existent powers. Now, the third fact, which we note as undeniable, is that our resources are *not* immediately available. We are in the condition of a merchant whose coffers are empty, but who has argosies of countless wealth at the Antipodes. Give him time to meet the demands upon him, and he can discharge them to the last farthing, and still have boundless affluence to spare. Press him for instant payment, and he becomes bankrupt as surely as if he were a man of straw. No one doubts that England, *give her a couple of years’ notice* (and make her once fairly believe in and realise the *bond fide* seriousness of such notice), could meet the world in arms. But no one doubts that *two months’* notice would find her almost wholly unprepared ; and who can reasonably hope that a vigilant and skilful enemy will give her even this space for preparation. The first two months after any declaration of war will be the critical and decisive time for this country :—in what condition, and with what prompt resources, will these first two months find us ?

The fact then which we here lay down as notorious and undisputed is, that though we may have, *in the country and in embryo*, ships enough to command our coasts, trained sailors enough to man them, trained gunners enough to fight them, rifled cannon enough to arm them,—yet we have not these necessary materials on board, in our dock-yards, and in our arsenals, in efficient condition, in sufficient numbers. Everything is in ample abundance ; but everything is in the potential mood, and in the *paulo-post-futurum* tense.

“4. We are told by certain politicians both at home and abroad that the superiority of the French fleet in force and readiness ought to give us no uneasiness ; that it is true they can harm us, but they won't ; that they are a changed and pacific people, no longer quarrelsome or aggressive, but business-like and money-making ; that they know the cost of war and like it as little as we do. Granted—for the sake of argument. Granted, to a great extent, even for the sake of truth. It is undeniable that war is unpopular with a great part, or at least with many great sections, of the French people. Manufacturers and handicraftsmen detest it on account of its effect on the sale of their commodities, and the sudden ruin in which it often involves them. Merchants and monied men hate it because it jeopardises and deranges commerce. The peasants hate it on account of the conscription. It is true there is a set-off against all this. War in France involves no increase of taxation. The Emperor is far too wise for this. To the mass, it brings merely fresh loans—i.e. increased demand for their savings, a readier investment, and a better interest. The army, too, have no objection to plunder and promotion ; the navy have no objection to employment and to prize-money ; and the nation, as a whole, are not entirely cured of their fancy for what they call glory and revenge. So that it is possible that a war, especially a short war, against England would be popular, when no other war would. But admit that war is unwelcome to the French people,—we have lately had signal proof how little they have to say in such matters. The Italian war was undertaken not only without the concurrence, but against the decided wish, of the whole people, unmistakeably and unanimously expressed—so far as expression is possible in France. Merchants, manufacturers, ministers, the Emperor's personal friends, the *ouvriers*, the peasants, all objected, and all who could protested,—but in vain. France was on one side, the Emperor on the other ; and the Emperor had his way.

"5. But, again, we are assured that Louis Napoleon has no design of attacking us, and entertains only the most friendly feelings towards us. It may be so now. Let us assume that it is; let us take the new decree as a practical pledge that it is so. We may believe that he retains some sentiments of gratitude for the hospitality he enjoyed here during many years of obscurity and exile; that he desires the goodwill and good opinion of a great and noble nation; that he is not indifferent to the reputation of a faithful and honourable ally; that he values civilization too much to put it to hazard by a struggle between the two people who stand foremost in its ranks. Assume all this, and count upon it to the utmost rational extent. Still the considerations remain, as indisputable and as serious as ever, that whatever Louis Napoleon is resolved on he can do, though all France should say him nay; that he is restless in temper, hampered by position, dark and fitful in fancy, secretive, impressible, and unaccountable. He is sensitive to what Englishmen say and write of him,—and Englishmen will never hold their tongues from caution, and they are not always just and not often moderate in their expressions of condemnation and mistrust. We are sure to give him umbrage every day,—and some day umbrage may be exacerbated into rage. He is sure to do things which we must blame, and ought to thwart and protest against,—and he may not always listen to our remonstrances with patience. He may repeat the experiment of the *Charles et Georges*; he may take offence about our armaments; he may be irritated about the Suez Canal; he may indulge in schemes against allies of ours, to which we could not be indifferent or passive. Already the *Moniteur* has been grumbling because our dockyards are active and our statesmen are sounding the note of warning; the *Journal des Debats* has received orders to back these murmurs; and even the very decree which reduces the French navy to a peace footing may be made a ground of offence when it is found that we are not intending to reduce our own navy,—which has never been put on a war footing,—*pari passu*. The conspiracy affair and the colonel's addresses may come over again. The day may dawn when some actual opposition to French desires, or some fancied affront to French susceptibility, may for a moment set that gunpowder people on fire, and when the Emperor may deem it safer to fall in with the popular frenzy than to thwart it or to calm it. At all events, the chapter of probabilities is rich, and Louis Napoleon, with all the virtues which are

ascribed to him, is, as we have said, *inscrutable* and incalculable. Two other facts, then, are indisputable. Let us lay them to heart as we ought, and digest them if we can. *First*, if we remain as unready and as inadequately defended as we are for one month longer, we are dependent on French forbearance, not on English strength—on what Louis Napoleon may choose to do, not on our means of preventing him from doing what he chooses. And, *secondly*, the pacific temper and conciliatory behaviour both of France and of its Chief, will bear a pretty exact proportion to the state of our national defences. They will respect us if we are strong and ready. They will affront us if we are weak and unprotected, as King John says

‘How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds  
Makes ill deeds done.’

It is foolish as well as wicked to place such a temptation in the way of fallible mortals, as we place in theirs. France if peacefully disposed may well reproach us with holding the irresistible allurements of pregnable wealth and beauty to the excitable imagination of her Ruler. Louis Napoleon if sincerely amicable, may equally reproach us, as he is said to have done, with holding out such prospective possibilities to his subjects as make it impossible for him to resist their covetous desires. And assuredly we as well as they shall be guilty of what may ensue, if evil come out of our tardy and insufficient preparations, since it is in our power to prevent war by making it hazardous, hopeless, and unprofitable.”

Here we have undeniable evidence of France (without the aid of Russia) being enabled to bring double the number of Ships and Seamen than England into the Channel whenever it suits her convenience to make a descent on our shores, clearing the Channel being the first step for that purpose in the opinion of the present ruler of that country as it was in the opinion of his Uncle, the first Emperor, when he contemplated the attempt, which he only abandoned when he learned that the fleets he calculated on for that purpose were unable

to arrive in sufficient time from the West Indies. As the present Emperor has so frequently declared it to be a portion of his destiny to do what his Uncle was unable to accomplish in this respect, we may as well remind our readers of the manner in which the First Napoleon proposed to accomplish this object, as ably explained in a letter from the Rev. Dr. Croly, Rector of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, which appeared in *The Morning Advertiser* of the 12th of the present month of August, in which the evidence of the Staff Surgeon O'Meara, who attended the Emperor at St. Helena, is given as to the manner in which he proposed acting in the event of the Channel being cleared as then contemplated:—

“ ‘ I would have hastened over my flotilla with 200,000 men, landed as near Chatham as possible and proceeded *direct* to London ; where I calculated to arrive in *four* days from the time of my landing.’ ”

“ Napoleon then stated the kind of *Government* which he would have formed, on his conquest. ‘ I would have proclaimed a *Republic*, the abolition of the *nobility*, and *House of Peers*, the *distribution* of the property of such of the latter as opposed me, among my partisans ; *Liberty, Equality*, and the *Sovereignty* of the people !’ ”

“ ‘ I would have published a proclamation, declaring that we came as (*friends* !) to the English, to free the nation from a corrupt and flagitious *Aristocracy*, and restore a *democracy* !’ ”

“ To O'Meara's observation, ‘ That England would have armed a million of men on the invasion, and burned London rather than surrender it,’ Napoleon replied with ridicule, ‘ I do not believe it ; you are too rich, and too fond of money. How often have the Parisians *sworn* to bury themselves under the ruins of their capital, rather than suffer it to fall into the hands of the enemies of France ; and yet *twice* it has been taken. The hope of a change for the better, and of a *division of property*, would have operated wonderfully among the *canaille*, especially that of London. What *resistance* could an *undisciplined* army make against mine in a country like England, abounding in plains ?’ ”

“ He then adverted to the favourite topic of *plunder*. ‘ I calculate

on the effect that would be produced by the possession of a great and rich capital, the Bank and all your riches, the ships in the river and Chatham. I expected that I should have had the command of the Channel for two months, by which I should have had supplies of troops. And when your fleet came back, they would have found their Capital in the hands of an enemy, and their country *overwhelmed by my armies!* Popular appeals also were not to be wanting, and the eloquence of the bulletin was to accompany the vigour of the bayonet. The Nation was to be won by rhetoric, in this attractive style. ‘The proclamation stating that we came only *as friends*, to relieve the English from an obnoxious and despotic Aristocracy, whose object was to keep the Nation eternally at *war*, in order to enrich themselves and their families with the blood of the people; together with proclaiming a Republic, the abolition of the *Monarchical government* and the *Nobility*, the declaration of the *forfeiture* of all the property of such of the latter as should resist, and its *division* among the partisans of the Revolution, with a general *equalisation* of property, would have gained me the support of the *canaille*, and of all the idle, the profligate, and the disaffected in the kingdom.’— (*O’Meara’s Napoleon in Exile*, vol. 1, p. 349.)

“He further says, that all his display of gunboats, praams, &c., at Boulogne, was merely to *deceive* the British people with the idea that they were to be attacked by gunboats; his real instruments being his forty or fifty *ships of the line*.

“‘They believed that I intended to force a passage by the mere military strength of the flotilla. The idea of my real plan *never* occurred to them; and when, on the failure of the movements of my fleet, they perceived the danger to which they had been exposed, the councils of London were thrown into consternation, and all people of sense confessed that England had never been so near her ruin.’”

Dr. Croly then observes that

“No design of his reign gives so striking an example of the ability of Napoleon: the conception seems to have been wholly his own. It was concocted with the most singular care; the despatches were written by his own hand; and the British Government was completely baffled. Nelson rushed up the Mediterranean in pursuit of a fleet, which

at that moment was crossing the Atlantic. But, on the memorable battle of Trafalgar being fought, and the French and Spanish fleet swept from the sea, the invasion was a dream!

"These extracts are made from *The Memoirs of the History of France, dictated by Napoleon at St. Helena*. (Vol. 3, p. 373, &c.)

"We have here the compendious history of one of the most comprehensive of all crimes, recorded in the sullen sincerity of a mind, whose game of ambition was played out; a man of delusions, who had ceased to delude; a criminal cut off from the world; a hermit on his rock; the confession of the condemned cell! If ever the passion for power is to be tamed by the lesson of ruin, here was the lesson given. There sat the foremost man of the world, under the eye of a *British Sentinel*!—the founder of Empire undiademmed—the soldier who had floated to fame on the blood of *three millions* of men; who gave thrones and took away thrones; the stamp of whose foot shook Europe like an earthquake; of all the splendid and startling phenomena which passed over the revolutionary horizon, the most splendid and the most startling—the first king and conqueror of his age, here denuded of all the investitures of his day of renown—sceptre and sword wrested from his hands; an exile and a prisoner; telling his story, sitting on his grave.

"This language is not used in the spirit of idle hostility, nor in any childish pretence to prediction. But, one thing is clear, that if, forced by the habitual hostility of his restless people, it should be the *necessity* of the French Emperor to burst upon us in the midst of our quiet labours and general abhorrence of war; he has 560,000 men whom he might put in march to-morrow for the coast; and a new fortress, within 70 miles of our shore, where he might embark them without obstruction, and a fleet to convoy them, at least equal in numbers to our own; the present reduction in his muster-roll is not worth our consideration. France might dismiss half her fleet and army to-day, with the certainty of their assemblage, at the first waving of a flag from the balcony of the Tuilleries. Even if there were a general disbandment on both sides, the conditions would still be unequal. *We must have to angle* in the population with the bait of a bounty; France has but to throw the drag-net of the Conscription, and draw the Preserve! Our principles are antagonistic. France has always looked to war, as the natural state of nations, and is comfortless in peace. England

always looks to peace, as the prosperity of nations, and denounces war as the fever which always ends in feebleness. Even in the present slight respite from convulsion, France is wringing her hands over the monotony of peace. 'Bread and bulletins' are equally the necessities of life. France, with her scars still fresh; France, even in her hospital-beds, is already polishing and priming her weapons.

"The army is complaining of its arrest in cropping the laurels of all the earth. The man is more than man, or less, on whom this universal pressure may not have a hazardous influence. The mercury of the French heart rapidly rises and falls. How brief may be the popularity of the man of the field, when he is transformed into the man of peace! How frequently does the *prestige* of opinion halt at the foot of the throne! How soon may the murmur of the *Café* become the cry of the Camp, and that cry be seconded by the shout of the multitude! It may require *all* the philosophy of a Frenchman, to keep his fortitude in this general temptation. But, under all the circumstances, *we must be prepared!*

"There could be no more fatal error, than to suppose that we are prepared, while we are actually asleep. Let the nation see the Militia, encamped and trained; the thousands and ten thousands of its Riflemen ready; the Lord-Lieutenants of all the Counties gathering their friends and neighbours about them armed, opening their demesnes for rifle practice, and showing, by their patriotic activity, that they are resolved to take the high and honourable part of English noblemen and gentlemen; free themselves from the stigma of sinecurism, and not be contented with endorsing the rescripts of a Secretary for War: *then* we may, under God, defy the challenge of fortune."

When we find by this pastoral lecture from the Rector of St. Stephen's, Walbrook, proclaiming his opinions on our present position, and proving, on the evidence of the First Napoleon, that his meditated invasion of our shores was frustrated by our numerical superiority in Ships and Seamen, and when it has been shown by the article thus quoted from the *Economist* that the present Emperor can now bring double the number that we



can of vessels of war into the Channel, it is manifest that the dangers of invasion are augmented in a two-fold degree, and not likely to be diminished when we have been so repeatedly informed by the organs of public opinion in France that he intends following the example of his Uncle by proclaiming, "that he came not as a foe but as a friend to the people, to relieve them from (what that Uncle designated) *an obnoxious and despotic aristocracy* who rule the State by means of the majorities they command in both Houses of Parliament." This he proposes to remedy by substituting, as in France, vote by ballot and freedom of election for bribery and corruption, whereby the people would have such preponderating majorities in their own House as would insure the respect of what has, in every sense of the term, been heretofore designated "*the Upper House.*"

"A House" (as they remind us) "that would not allow even the Queen to exercise her prerogative of creating a peer for life without their consent, or a representative of the Citizens of London to take his seat in their own House of Parliament until (after repeated supplications, exceeding a dozen years), they were at length induced to do so by a side wind, as a matter of special favor—These liberators of oppressed nationalities propose to open the doors to the people (as in France) for advancement in the church, army and navy, by giving merit precedence over the possession of wealth and aristocratic connections—We are no longer to be degraded by the designation of the First Emperor as a nation of shop-keepers—as the sale of church-livings, commissions in the army, &c. &c. will be no longer permitted—All ecclesiastical property is to be placed in the hands of Government, and

the Clergy of all denominations, like all public servants, (as in France) paid out of the public purse. This bone of contention once removed the nation will be benefitted, all religious distinctions which give rise to such dissensions will cease, as in France after their revolution, by which (as they also allege) that nation was raised to its present elevated station of glory and prosperity."

To Ireland where territorial aristocrats and absentee landlords are represented as causing oppressions unknown in any other civilized portion of the globe, where the established Church is represented as not that of the people, and where the people are consequently forced to maintain a clergy from whom they derive neither spiritual nor temporal relief from the oppressions they labor under ; measures of this nature we are thus induced to believe would be received as a great boon, accompanied by what is termed tenant right, a permanency of tenure at a rent that would enable the cultivators of the soil to obtain food for themselves and families as long as they paid that rent, without the fear of being turned out naked to perish on the highways at the will and pleasure of their territorial aristocrats and absentee landlords, evils aided by emigration and famine which have recently reduced the population there by two millions of human beings.

Had the professed intentions of disarmament by France been sincere the organs of public opinion there would not be allowed to continue to fulminate sentiments of such a hostile nature as regards this country. But when we find, so late as the 26th of August last, the following extract from one of their organs, dictating the course to be pursued towards England, as

published in *The Times*, we may draw our own conclusions as to the sincerity of their pacific declarations and friendly feelings :—

“Excite yourselves to enthusiasm in presence of this nation, the genius of which is the genius of evil, and which seems to be upon earth the instrument which God has chosen for the chastisement of humanity, &c. By means of her ships she transports over every sea her manufactured products and brings back into her island those which are necessary for her subsistence. Shut up the sea against her, she shall succumb ; carry on against her a formidable competition, you shall ruin her—keep on the ocean powerful squadrons capable of intercepting her commerce, and of struggling with her fleets, you shall destroy her security.

“Now, without security there is no commerce, without commerce *no England*. To require that Great Britain shall behold without mistrust and jealousy the French flag afloat on every sea with formidable squadrons at Brest, Cherbourg and Toulon is to ask more than she can give. It is of vital interest for her to arrest or destroy them. It is of the greatest interest for France to defend and preserve them in spite of England.”

When such feelings towards this country are still permitted to be promulgated by the French Government we must only hope that the complicated state of affairs in Italy occasioned by the recent war against Austria and the cry of “*Italy for Italians*” so ostentatiously promulgated by the liberator of oppressed nationalities, may occupy his attention. That his endeavours to restore Italy to the Austrians, after thus exciting their hopes, will induce him to postpone his visit to this country until after our ensuing Session of Parliament, and that our Government will in the meantime exert itself to the utmost in improving our naval and military armaments, and hold out such prospects of advancement to meritorious individuals

as will induce them to enter both services with greater zeal than can be expected under (what the eloquent historian Napier termed) "*the cold shade of our aristocracy.*" That men distinguished by their merits shall no longer be driven from the service by the sale of their commissions, in the army or on the retired lists of the navy, to make room for the advancement of incompetent scions of that aristocracy. If the Whigs are sincere they can now obtain concessions from the fears of our aristocratic rulers which they never could obtain from their sense of justice. Let them no longer look upon the people as the *stalking horse* upon which they can ride to eternity—Of the premier who leaves office and of the leader of his political opponents who is to succeed—Let them no longer amuse themselves by saying to each other "thus we ride and tie, you ride awhile and then I!" Matters are now becoming more serious, the people will no longer be trifled with or continue to be *this stalking horse*—Let them look to the trades and political unions now organizing by the aid of foreign refugees against the classes by whom they consider themselves agrieved.

Let them recollect O'Connel's declaration as to England's difficulty being Ireland's opportunity, and Ledru Rolin's predictions of "*La décadence de l'Angleterre*" —That when in opposition they obtained a popularity by their professions, which they lost when in office by their practice—That if they would now retain office, the people will insist on *men of principle* being their *principal men* —That it is only by making the ruling few uneasy that the oppressed many can hope for relief—That the ruling few must now feel uneasy, that this is consequently the time for insisting on such reforms in Church and State

as will palliate the evils pointed out by the organs of "*The Liberator of Oppressed Nationalities*"—and, above all, that Ireland (where a sword has been recently subscribed for as a donation to Marshal M'Mahon with an intimation from some of the donors as to the use required to be made of it), is well known to be destined for the first visitation of this nature, and that the separation of Ireland from England, however advantageous to the Irish people, would be the first step towards "*La décadence de l'Angleterre.*"

"*Timeo Danaos et dona ferentes.*"













